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METHUEN'S ENGLISH CLASSICS

SHAKESPEARE TO HARDY

AN ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH
LYRICS

Chosen *by* A. METHUEN

With an Introduction
by ROBERT LYND



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TO
WALTER DE LA MARE
MAKER OF LOVELY VERSE

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION BY ROBERT LYND	ix
PREFACE	xxix
EDITOR'S NOTE	xxxiii
INDEX TO AUTHORS	xxxv
TEXT	1-533
INDEX OF FIRST LINES	535

NOR can I not believe but that hereby
Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote
From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,
Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous
thought :

And thus from day to day my little boat
Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.
Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !
Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

William Wordsworth

THE USES OF POETRY

IT is unlikely that anyone in these days ever becomes a reader of poetry except for the pleasure it gives him. And yet there is seldom a poet or a critic who treats of poetry as though pleasure were its chief end. The poet seeks to justify the pleasure he gives, and the critic the pleasure he receives, on something like utilitarian grounds : few men can write in praise of tragedy, for instance, without reminding us that, according to Aristotle, it purges us spiritually through pity and terror. "Tragedy, as it was anciently composed," said Milton in the preface to *Samson Agonistes*, "hath been ever held to be the gravest, moralest and most profitable of all other poems ; therefore said by Aristotle to be of power, by raising pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of those and such like passions."

Molière pleaded as earnestly to a practical world on behalf of comic poetry. The duty of comedy, he said, was to correct men while amusing them. The lyric poets have on the whole been slower to claim either moral or medicinal power for their poetry. But even they have been haunted by the desire to prove that their works are of profit as well as of delight. "The great instrument of moral good," said Shelley, "is the imagination ; and

poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause. . . . Poetry strengthens the faculty which is the organ of the moral nature of man in the same measure as exercise strengthens a limb." Matthew Arnold, a generation later, reverted to the medicinal theory of the uses of poetry. He spoke of Goethe as the "Physician of the Iron Age," and, at the time of Wordsworth's death, cried despairingly :

But where will Europe's latter hour
Again find Wordsworth's healing power ?

Even Matthew Arnold, however, would have given the name of healer only to a few poets. It was left to a young poet of our own time, Mr. Robert Graves, to claim for all good poetry this healing power. "Poetry," he declares in his little book, *On English Poetry*, "as the Greeks knew when they adopted the Drama as a cleansing rite of religion, is a form of psycho-therapy." He then goes on to explain his theory of the medical value of poetry in a passage that reads like a page of Aristotle seen through the spectacles of Dr. Freud. "Being," says Mr. Graves, "the transformation into dream symbolism of some disturbing emotional crisis in the poet's mind (whether dominated by delight or pain), poetry has the power of homœopathically healing other men's minds similarly troubled, by presenting them under the spell of hypnosis with an allegorical solution of the trouble. Once the allegory is recognized by the reader's unconscious mind as applicable, the affective power of his own emotional crisis is diminished." He adds—and Sir Algernon Methuen and every other good anthologist should glow with pleasure at so startling a tribute to their usefulness—

"A well-chosen anthology is a complete dispensary of medicine for the more common mental disorders, and may be used as much for prevention as cure." Thus does Mr. Graves take us back through the centuries by way of Aristotle to the image of the poet as David playing to the disordered Saul. This is what comes of trying to prove that poetry is useful. Romeo would probably have found himself knee-deep in sentences as curious if he had set out to prove scientifically the usefulness of falling in love.

Now, the therapeutics of love is an interesting subject, and the therapeutics of poetry is an interesting subject, but we cannot help being a little shocked when the lover and the poet begin to discuss these matters in the scientific jargon of the hour, instead of leaving them to the doctors. Even though all that they say on the subject is true, it seems none the less incongruous on lips that have been touched by the divine fire. The Greeks were content to call Apollo the Healer without adding that he was the Homœopathist. Most of the poets, indeed, have been wisely indefinite and mystical in their defence of poetry from too reasonable men. They know in the depths of their beings that poetry is as indefensible as love or the sun, and that anyone who cares to challenge such things is unanswerable in his darkness. Hence, when Shelley replied in *A Defence of Poetry* to Peacock's prosaically amusing denunciation of modern poets, he did not trouble to reply to Peacock's arguments. He talked about the nature of poetry from a mountain-top, from which his voice could not possibly reach Peacock on his well-trimmed lawn in the valley. Besides, Peacock was too busily engaged in conversation to

listen to him. "Mr. Wordsworth," Peacock laughed, "picks up village legends from old women and sextons. . . . A poet in our days is a semi-barbarian in a civilized community." "Poetry," replies Shelley with glorious inconsequence, "redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man. Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is deformed." "Poetry," continues Peacock, charming his guests with his gift of irreverent epigram, "was the mental rattle that awakened the attention of intellect in the infancy of civil society: but for the maturity of mind to make a serious business of the playthings of its childhood is as absurd as for a full-grown man to rub his gums with coral and cry to be charmed to sleep by the jingle of silver bells." "Poets," declares Shelley—and be sure Peacock still does not hear him—"are the unacknowledged legislators of the world." That, it seems to me, represents fairly enough the essentials of the eternal debate—usually unspoken—between those who care for poetry and those who do not. There is really no answer—except from the doctors—to a man who puts up the shutters as soon as the sun rises and observes that it is infinitely more natural for a modern man to live in artificial light. As the doctors have not chosen to speak on the matter, however, and are more accustomed to advising people to eat lettuce than to read poetry, Mr. Graves is, perhaps, justified in taking over the language of the text-books in order to remind them that Hygeia is the bosom friend of the Muses.

Even so, I think we should be taking too narrow a

view of the uses of poetry if we thought of them as being mainly homœopathic. The uses of poetry are as various as the uses of light, and, just as men instinctively love light without considering whether it does them any good or not, so they—or many of them—instinctively love poetry without considering whether it does them any good or not. It is only when men have ceased to take natural pleasure in these things that it becomes necessary to discuss the hygiene of light or the hygiene of poetry. In such circumstances, I think, the best defence of poetry is that it is light embodied in words—the light of the intellect and the imagination. “There is none but God and the poet,” said Tasso, “who deserves the name of Creator,” and it is because the poet is endowed in some measure with the creative light that we regard the poetic as the supreme quality in literature, whether we find it in verse or in prose. The poet, indeed, is but a new echo of the original “Fiat lux,” and he may almost be said himself to create a new world by illuminating it. Or we may compare him in his light-giving powers to the linnet in Mr. de la Mare’s poem :

Upon this leafy bush
With thorns and roses in it,
Flutters a thing of light,
A twittering linnet,
And all the throbbing world
Of dew and sun and air
By this small parcel of life
Is made more fair.

The poet, like the linnet, is a “thing of light,” a “small parcel of life,” by whose song all the world is made fairer. Every poet, however, has his own

peculiar quality of light. The light of Paradise that we find in Henry Vaughan is different from the light that Wordsworth pours into the valley of the Highland reaper, or on the figure of the old leech-gatherer, standing "motionless as a cloud" at the edge of the muddy pond, or on the ships and buildings of London seen at dawn from Westminster Bridge,

All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

The light of Wordsworth's own genius was not less purificatory than the morning light that visited the streets and the river of London. As for Shelley, the most lyrical of the poets, he was also the most prodigal of light. Light rather than the solid earth is his element as it is the element of the rainbow. The light which a poet gives cannot, of course, be measured by the references to light in his work, but I imagine that if any statistician took the trouble to enumerate all the references of the kind in English poetry, he would discover that Shelley was far more preoccupied with light than any other writer. Browning addressed him as "Sun-treader," and in no other poet do we find such an exaggerated sense of light as in lines such as :

Like a thousand dawns on a single night,
The splendours rise and spread.

Shelley himself speaks of the skylark as being

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought ;

and thought, love and liberty were all for him an effluence of the divine creative light. Poetry he praised as the bringer of light and fire. What would the visible world be, he asked, and what our noblest

feelings, "if poetry did not ascend to bring light and fire from those eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not ever soar?"

It would be instructive to study the passion for light, which is the essential characteristic of the poet as well as of the mystic, as it reveals itself in one poet after another, from Milton with his

Hail, holy Light!

and his lighted celestial scene:

Where the bright seraphim in burning row
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow;

down to Mr. Hardy, with the light hoped-for rather than seen of "The Darkling Thrush," and Mr. Yeats, whose verse is pervaded by a haunted twilight. But such a study would be outside the scope of this introduction, which is merely an attempt to raise the question whether poetry may not be as necessary to human beings in the intellectual world as light is in the physical world.

We must be careful, however, not to make too solemn claims for the poets as though they diffused none but a Sabbath light over things. It is true enough to say of poetry, with Ben Jonson, that it "utters somewhat above a mortal mouth," but poetry has its everyday as well as its divine moods, and any theory of poetry, in order to be satisfactory, must be wide enough to include Herrick as well as Blake. Herrick's light may be almost as tiny as a glow-worm's, and, like a glow-worm's, may shine close to the ground. We can delight in this glow-worm light without comparing it to the cosmic radiance of *Paradise Lost*, or Wordsworth's "Ode."

All light, no doubt, is, in the last analysis, one ; but light is for play as well as for worship, and we feel that there is not enough room left in Shelley's theory of poetry for the Prior who wrote :

The merchant, to secure his treasure,
Conveys it in a borrow'd name ;
Euphelia serves to grace my measure ;
But Chloe is my real flame ;

or for the Gray who wrote :

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw
A whisker first, and then a claw
With many an ardent wish ;
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize—
What female heart can gold despise ?
What cat's averse to fish ?

There are critics who would say that the poems in which these lines occur are not poetry but verse. But the Greeks were wiser who set a Muse of comedy among the nine. Prior and Gray, in their light verse, have illuminated common and even comic things in such a way as to give them the brightness of "a new existence." It would be too much to say of the poetry I have quoted that "it purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being," but it does unquestionably remove the film of familiarity from our sight so that we can look on common and trivial objects as though they were things freshly created. Coleridge, as well as Shelley, uses this phrase, "the film of familiarity," and he describes the object of Wordsworth in his early poems as being "to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's atten-

tion from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us." It would be impossible to describe more admirably what the creative light of the poet does for us. The lethargy of custom tends to make us blind, and it is only when we become poets, either in ourselves or in the company of poets, that we can see even the world before our eyes in all its loveliness and wonder.

Unfortunately, the poets themselves are subject to the lethargy of custom. Their light is intermittent, and may fade even before the end of a short poem. There are poets who have written only one inspired poem, others who have written only two or three. It is hard to say whether it is a greater miracle that Shirley should have written "The Glories of our Blood and State," or that, having written it, he should have written nothing else in the same kind. How can we explain it unless we remember that "the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness," and that this transitory brightness may occur only once in a lifetime? How transitory the brightness is may be seen in many a poem that begins in immortal beauty and in which all the lights go out after the first few lines. Take the opening verses of Burns's "Bonnie Lesley," for instance, and compare the genius of the first six lines with the prosaic jingle of the six that follow :

O, saw ye Bonnie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the border †
She's gone like Alexander
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever ;
For Nature made her what she is
And ne'er made sic anither.

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we before thee ;
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

The light has disappeared before the third verse as suddenly as a candle blown out.

Mr. Hardy, in a recent preface, reminds critics of " Coleridge's proof that a versification of any length neither can be nor ought to be all poetry," but critics cannot help being astonished when, on reading some of the most deservedly famous short lyrics, they find that even these are not all poetry. Many a poem has won immortality merely because it begins beautifully. Waller cannot maintain the full beauty of " Go, lovely rose " even through four verses. In the last lines of " My soul, there is a country " Vaughan suddenly droops from imagination to exhortation. Byron's " She walks in beauty, like the night " never again recovers the magic of its opening line. Coleridge's and Wordsworth's poems are full of examples of the same intermittency of inspiration. Both " Tintern Abbey " and " The Leech-Gatherer " contain many a dim line. In Tennyson and Swinburne, again, bright light and dull light alternate with extraordinary suddenness, and Sir Algernon Methuen's reduction of Swinburne's " Garden of Proserpine " to three verses seems to me to be a just criticism of the transient inspiration of a beautiful poem.

And poetry is as capricious in visiting nations as

in visiting men and women. It makes a royal progress through one country rather than another, and through one age rather than another, and we can account for this no more than for a season of fine weather. We can, no doubt, invent explanations, but, when we have invented all we can, the coming of Shakespeare and the poets who surrounded him is as amazing an event as the appearance of a new solar system.

It may be that lyric poetry has flourished in England beyond most other countries because it is the most private of the arts. The Englishman, living in the privacy of an island, in the privacy of his home, in the privacy of himself, turns, we may fancy, to poetry where the genius of more social nations turns to music or painting or conversational prose. Music and painting are arts scarcely less public in their intention than preaching. Poetry, compared with them, is the art of the man who can live independently of the crowd. If he needs company, it is as a letter-writer needs it, not as an orator needs it. No sooner do we begin to weigh this explanation, however, than we remember that the great age of English poetry came at a time when the Englishman was most sociable and least isolated from his fellows. It was the summer-time of wit and good company, of which Beaumont wrote to Ben Jonson in that noble hyperbole :

What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid ! heard words that have been
So nimble and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
And had resolved to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life.

Besides this, the age of Shakespeare was that in which dramatic poetry, which is as public an art as music, flourished as it had never flourished before, except in Greece. And even the lyric poetry of the time, or a great deal of it, was hardly poetry of the private sort. Much of it was written for the theatre or for music. We do not feel that Ben Jonson is speaking in the secret confessional of his bosom when he writes :

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep.
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright.

This is no more personal than drama itself, and the same is true of half the fine lyrics of the period. We have only to compare them with the lyrics of later ages to see how the personal element afterwards became more dominant in English lyric poetry. You will look in vain through most of the Elizabethan poets for a lyric so personal as Mr. Hardy's "Darkling Thrush," with its moving ending :

So little cause for carrollings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy, good-night air
Some blessed hope whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

It is not that the Elizabethans felt less deeply than men have felt since Wordsworth. It is merely that they were more generally given to dramatizing their emotions, even in their lyrics—to bidding

them act their part in the theatre of poetry rather than to inviting poetry to enter their doors and sit down by their fires. It may be that this very frustration of the personal element in their songs resulted in a sweeter and more exquisite music than has since been heard in English literature. The Elizabethan took life into the kingdom of literature rather than brought literature into the uneasy republic of life. He sought a speech that was richer than his country's speech. His discovery of literature was the conquest of a strange land no less than any of the discoveries of the travellers. He found gold in it of an abundance such as no Englishman of any previous generation had even guessed at in a dream. Many of his smallest writings are touched with the excitement of the discovery of this country of El Dorado. There has never since been such a profusion of great literature in England. It was as though the Elizabethan had found the perfect compromise, in which literature became at once the most public and the most private of the arts.

Even at that time, a writer of powerful genius, John Donne, was already beginning to turn the lyric from a song or a piece of golden wit into a vehement personal utterance. He was a true Elizabethan in his earlier and more impersonal work, such as the witty "Go and catch a falling star." But in poems such as "The Relique" and "The Ecstasy" he had broken the Elizabethan mould for good, and made the lyric a vehicle for confessions as personal in their way as any that are to be found in Pepys's Diary. Jonson said of him that "for not keeping accent Donne deserved hanging." But Donne

did not lack an ear for music. What he had done to lyric poetry was to bring into it a new accent of individuality. I am not suggesting that personal confessions do not exist elsewhere in the poetry of the time—in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, for instance. But with a few exceptions Shakespeare's confessions in the *Sonnets* are, in comparison with Donne's, translated and put on the stage. So much is this so that, incredible though it seems, many writers will have it that they are not confessions at all but poetical exercises. Critics tell us the same of Sidney's addresses to Stella. They could hardly say it of the poetry of Donne as he foretells the unearthing of his skeleton with its "bracelet of bright hair about the bone."

It is not to Donne, however, great though his genius was, that we turn for the perfect lyric. It is to Shakespeare, to Campion, and after them, to Herrick; for Herrick alone of the lesser poets preserved the Elizabethan music. Compared with Herrick, poets such as Lovelace and Suckling wrote, not songs, but exquisite *billets-doux*. Love itself dwindled into a theme for a *billet-doux*, and the greatest poetry of the middle of the century was to come, not from lovers but from men whose lives were dedicated to the service of God and their fellows. Milton, it has been said, was not so profoundly religious a poet as Herbert or Vaughan, but Milton plunged into depths of emotion of which Herbert and Vaughan knew nothing, and, behind the noble pomp of his utterance, he was the most personal poet of his age. His sonnet on his blindness, his sonnet on his dead wife, the opening of the third book of *Paradise Lost*—these are lyrical expressions

of personal grief different in kind from any that had yet appeared in English literature.

Puritanism has often been blamed as the enemy of the arts, but the writings of Milton and Marvell prove that at least it was not the enemy of poetry. Marvell, it is true, was less a Puritan than a Horatian wit in Puritan dress. He did not live imaginatively in the world beyond the grave even when he was writing about the grave, but on the green earth.

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near :
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.

.
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

The mood of these lines is as far removed from that of Milton as it is from that of Vaughan. Vaughan walked in the white light of Paradise. Milton was the impassioned theologian and politician of Heaven. He was no mystic, and he saw the things of eternity itself magnificently in terms of space and time. His Puritanism may seem to many people materialistic, but at least he got from it that majestic seriousness that we find even in his lighter verse, such as the sonnet to Cyriack Skinner. And out of this majestic seriousness came a majestic perfection of phrase without a parallel in English literature.

English poetry during the century that followed lacked the seriousness of the private speech of the soul. The age of Queen Anne and the succeeding half-century were a time during which men wrote even their letters with an eye to publication. It was

the age of the conversationalist, the orator and the handed-round letter. Poetry attained its perfection for the time being not in the lyric but in the epistle, as in Pope's dazzling lines to Martha Blount. If modern readers prefer Gray and Collins to Pope, it is because they see in them, not merely the authors of one or two masterpieces, but forerunners of the return to private poetry. In Blake, who was born in 1757, and in Burns, who was born two years later, the individual soul, the individual heart, reconquered literature and expressed themselves freely and profusely in verse, as they had not done for a hundred years.

It is, of course, impossible to sum up the genius either of a poet or of an age of poets in a formula. But lovers of formulæ may be excused if they see in the long age between Blake and Mr. de la Mare an era of experiment, an era of discovery, when they contrast it with the Augustan age that preceded it. Poets no longer keep to the correctness of the road. They become trespassers whithersoever the spirit leads them ; and the judges at first condemn them. They are obedient to the law, but it is the law of the kingdom within, not an imposed code of rules. They seek variety, and the very forms in which they write are more various than the forms of any previous century. Even the classicists among them, such as Landor and Tennyson, are personal and experimental to a degree that was never approached by any of the Augustans. Matthew Arnold, for all his reverence for the tradition, was an experimentalist, an individualist, in his choice of themes and metres. Poetry no longer sought the publicity of the stage, the publicity of song, the publicity of wit.

It became private as a man's grief or his love. Browning's semi-dramatic form is merely the disguise of a personal assertion that runs through all his work. It may be that poetry has lost as well as gained by its excessive subjectivity and that another age will find a noble compromise between subjectivity and objectivity as the Greeks and the Elizabethans did. To poetry purely lyrical, however, the gain has been greater than the loss. In the lyric poetry of the last century and a half, new worlds have been created for the imagination, and we may reasonably accept the view that this is a result of the imagination's having been given the liberty of new fields. The consequent change is probably analogous to the change brought about by the idea of democracy in the world of politics. It was an age of excessive individualism, and poets turned naturally to the lyric as the most individualistic of all forms of poetry. But generalizations of this kind are not true unless we recognize that they are only partly true, and every reader of this Anthology will be able to modify them for himself, or even flatly contradict them, as he turns from the verse of Blake to that of Coleridge, and from the poems of Tennyson to those of Mr. Yeats.

Sir Algernon Methuen, in the present book, has added another to the number of good anthologies. There is, luckily, no such thing as a perfect anthology. An anthology is a confession of taste, and no two critics (not even critics of supremely good taste) would choose exactly the same poems for an anthology any more than they would grow exactly the same flowers in a garden. They would be able to agree that Shakespeare is the greatest English

poet, but they would probably be unable to agree even as to which is his greatest play, or which his most beautiful lyric. They would readily agree that Donne is a greater poet than Waller, but they would almost certainly differ when it came to making a selection of Donne's six best poems. There is a universal element in taste, but there is also a personal element. This is decided by temperament and by all manner of associations, so that Matthew Arnold makes a stronger appeal to one reader than to another, and that to many readers Byron, like Pope, makes no appeal at all. There are in this anthology a number of poems which I, for instance, do not like. One of these is Coleridge's "Love." Another is Pope's "Elegy to an Unfortunate Lady." Who is to decide whether either of these poems is worthy of a place? The anthologist must make his own confession of taste, and his taste is, after all, the more interesting to us because it does not coincide at every point with our own. All that we can fairly ask of an anthologist is that he shall give evidence that his choice has been directed by the universal as well as by the personal element in good taste. There is always room for a new anthology because the two elements never interact in quite the same way in different persons.

To dip into a good anthology, indeed, is to enjoy the pleasures of literary conversation in which one exchanges opinions with the anthologist on this poem and on that, and has also the repeated delight of finding his enthusiasm in agreement with one's own. It is to enjoy a walk and a talk in a garden that is not one's own garden, but that in many points resembles the garden one would like one's

own to be. The Editor of this book invites us into a delightful garden, and, even if there are crabbed critics among us who look on certain poems by Coleridge and Pope as being no better than yellow calceolarias, we cannot but rejoice in the wealth of roses and lilies and in the lavish loveliness of the crowded borders.

ROBERT LYND

PREFACE

THIS book, which aims at gathering together the finest lyrics from Shakespeare to Hardy, is, as all such collections must be, the reflection of a personal taste. Whatever canons of criticism we may profess to follow, the personal note is finally supreme. It is pleasure that the reader seeks. He will never be satisfied with canons; it is the impact of the poem on his own mind, the echo in his own heart which leave him barren or enriched. But, subject to the influence of this factor, the anthologist tries to pursue some principle of selection and he cannot go far wrong if he makes Truth and Beauty the tests. If these are present, the appeal of a poem is universal: it is true for all men and for all time.

For the poet touches life at every point: he paints all phases of human existence—not only Love but the more serious thoughts and longings of mortal man. If poetry is, as Matthew Arnold has said, a criticism of life, then the poet is concerned with life as a whole—with the love of country, with the secrets of Nature, with the joy of living and the dark mystery of death, with the eternal homesickness of man's soul, with the puzzle of this unintelligible world. Abstract beauty moves him as much as love, and in moments of exaltation he mounts to ideal regions and sees, as Blake and Wordsworth saw, not so much the outward creation as the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending. To such a vision the common man is not wholly blind. He knows, without seeming to know, what is beautiful and true. His heart leaps up at Keats' "Nightingale," or Shelley's "Skylark," or Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," or Wordsworth's "I heard a thousand blended notes," or Shirley's "The

glories of our blood and state," or Vaughan's "Unfold, unfold," or Hardy's "The Darkling Thrush." But thus to thrill is given to few. Some poets, even those accounted great, have not the supreme touch. We admire, we respect, but our pulses do not tingle. It would be absurd, then, to claim for all or nearly all the pieces in this book that they attain to the highest rank. Probably not two hundred do, but the rest, we may hope, approach it, and to omit these would be to aim at an impossible standard. It would be tedious to justify the omissions and inclusions in this anthology, but, as a rule, long poems are omitted, for length seems to neutralize the essential movement and completeness of the true lyric, which is a short poem devoted to a single idea.¹ A few great names are absent, for some poets are not masters of lyrical verse. Certain well-known pieces are not here because they seem to be too empty or formal. On the other hand, many pieces, which some may despise as hackneyed, are included, for one does not reject beautiful flowers for one's garden because they are familiar.

The choice of modern poems has been difficult. Some of the finest pieces I have already included in another anthology,² and it seemed superfluous to use them all again in this book. A few authors³ have been unwilling to allow their best pieces to be given and to that extent the selection is not fully representative. There is another trouble. We stand too near the moderns to judge surely. They are of our period, and our prejudices, for or against, are too strong for the most perfect taste not to go astray. Time has settled the fate of the old masters. The new poets must run the gauntlet of centuries before their place is assured, but we feel that the future will deal very

¹ In a few cases I have ventured to cut out from a long poem what seemed to be redundant or inferior.

² "An Anthology of Modern Verse." Chosen by Sir A. Methuen. With an Introduction by Robert Lynd. Twenty-first Edition, fcp. 8vo, 6s. net.

³ Mr. A. E. Housman and Mr. Ralph Hodgson have refused permission to include any of their pieces. There seems to be growing up a fear that inclusion in an anthology may have a prejudicial effect on the volume from which the piece is taken. I feel sure, on the contrary, that it will send the reader in search of other poems by the same author.

gently with Hardy and Bridges and Kipling and Yeats and De la Mare, and I have no hesitation in giving specimens of the beautiful art of others less famous.

The arrangement of the poems is always a problem. Shall we set them in order of time or in alphabetical sequence or according to subjects? To most the chronological order would seem the fittest because it displays the evolution of the lyric. But the alphabetical order is the simplest and the most easy for reference. It has another merit: it is full of pleasing surprises and contrasts. The mind tires of too many Elizabethans and turns with relief to the twentieth century. Thus Belloc comes next the Bible, George Herbert rubs shoulders with Henley, Kipling treads on Lamb and Rossetti on Sassoon. To some, such sequence may seem fantastic, but the judgment of the world takes small account of periods, and there is little real difference between the poets of the sixteenth and of the twentieth centuries. They all love the same England: they are all, if with varying accents, masters of the same incomparable tongue.

A. M.

September 1922

EDITOR'S NOTE

WARM thanks are due to those friends who have helped the Editor with their advice and to those Authors and Publishers who have allowed the use of so many copyright poems.

INDEX TO AUTHORS

	PAGE
A. E. : b. 1867 (<i>George Russell</i>)(<i>Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.</i>):	
The Twilight of Earth	1
ARNOLD, MATTHEW : 1822-1888.	
Quiet Work	3
✓ Shakespeare	3
To a Friend	4
The Forsaken Merman	5
To Marguerite	9
The Song of Callicles on Etna	10
Requiescat	12
Philomela	13
Dover Beach	14
The Scholar Gipsy	15
Self-Dependence	24
**The Buried Life	25
Memorial Verses	27
**Rugby Chapel	30
A Summer Night.	34
The Future	37
BACON, FRANCIS : 1561-1626.	
Vanitas Vanitatum	39
BARNEFIELD, RICHARD : 1574-1627.	
An Ode	41
BARNES, WILLIAM : 1801-1886 (<i>Messrs. George Routledge & Sons, Ltd.</i>):	
In the Spring	41
Woak Hill	42

** Slightly shortened.

	PAGE
BEAUMONT, FRANCIS : 1584-1616.	
Meditation	43
BELLOC, HILAIRE : b. 1870 (<i>Messrs. Duckworth & Co.</i>):	
The South Country	44
BIBLE, THE :	
Cœli enarrant	46
Memento creatoris tui	47
Inclyti Israel	48
Super flumina	49
Dominus regit me	50
BINYON, LAURENCE : b. 1869 (<i>The Times</i>):	
For the Fallen	51
BLAKE, WILLIAM : 1757-1827.	
I give you the end of a Golden String	52
A Song of Singing	52
How Sweet I Roamed	53
Infant Joy	54
Infant Sorrow	54
To the Evening Star	54
Spring	55
The Dance of the Flowers	56
The Lark's Ascent	57
The Little Black Boy	58
On Another's Sorrow	59
Ah, Sunflower	60
The Tiger	60
Night	61
**Auguries of Innocence	63
The Land of Dreams	64
The Two Songs	64
London	65
Christian Forbearance	66
The New Jerusalem	66
To the Christians.	67
BLUNDEN, EDMUND : b. 1896 (<i>Mr. R. Cobden-Sanderson</i>):	
Evening Mystery	68
** Slightly shortened.	

BRETON, NICHOLAS : 1545-1626.	
A Sweet Lullaby	68
BRIDGES, ROBERT : b. 1844 (<i>Mr. John Murray</i>) :	
A Late Spring Evening	70
London Snow	71
Nightingales	73
BRONTË, EMILY : 1818-1848.	
The Prisoner	74
Last Lines	75
BROOKE, RUPERT : 1887-1915 (<i>Messrs. Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd.</i>) :	
Peace	76
The Dead	77
The Soldier	78
BROWN, T. E. : 1830-1897 (<i>Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.</i>) :	
The Pitcher	78
My Garden	80
BROWNING, ELIZABETH B. : 1806-1861.	
From "The Rhyme of the Duchess May"	80
A Musical Instrument	81
BROWNING, ROBERT : 1812-1889 (<i>*Mr. John Murray</i>) :	
**A Grammarian's Funeral	82
Memorabilia	86
Evelyn Hope	87
The Patriot	89
The Lost Leader	90
It's wiser being good than bad	91
Home Thoughts, from Abroad	91
Home Thoughts, from the Sea	92
The Year's at the Spring	93
Prospice	93
*Epilogue	94
BUNYAN, JOHN : 1628-1688.	
The Song of the Shepherd Boy	95

** Slightly shortened.

	PAGE
BURNS, ROBERT : 1759-1796.	
A Red, Red Rose	95
I love my Jean	96
Highland Mary	97
My Bonnie Mary	98
Bonnie Lesley	99
Ae Fond Kiss	100
The Banks o' Doon	101
To a Mouse.	101
John Anderson	103
For a' that and a' that	104
Address to the Unco' Guid	105
To a Mountain Daisy	107
BYRON, LORD : 1788-1824.	
There be none of Beauty's Daughters	109
She Walks in Beauty	110
Stanzas for Music	111
The Isles of Greece	112
We'll go no more a-Roving	115
On this day I complete my Thirty-sixth Year	116
CAMPBELL, THOMAS : 1777-1844.	
Hohenlinden	117
CAMPION, THOMAS : 1567-1619.	
The Fairy Queen Proserpina	119
Cherry Ripe	120
The Man of Life Upright	120
Follow Your Saint	121
When Thou must Home	122
Never Weather-beaten Sail	122
CAREW, THOMAS : 1598-1639.	
Mediocrity in Love Rejected	123
CHATTERTON, THOMAS : 1752-1770.	
All Under the Willow Tree	124
CHESTERTON, G. K. : b. 1874 (* Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.) († Messrs. Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd.) :	
†The Rolling English Road	126
†O God of Earth and Altar	127
*The Donkey	128

INDEX TO AUTHORS

xxxix

	PAGE
CLARE, JOHN : 1793-1864.	
The Thrush's Nest	129
Tell-Tale Flowers	129
The Dying Child	130
Lasciate ogni Speranza	131
Autumn	132
CLOUGH, A. H. : 1819-1861.	
Westward the Land is Bright	133
COLERIDGE, SAMUEL TAYLOR : 1772-1834.	
Youth and Age	134
Love	135
Kubla Khan	139
The Eolian Harp.	140
**Frost at Midnight	143
Inscription for a Fountain	144
The Poet in the Clouds	145
The Knight's Tomb	146
COLLINS, WILLIAM : 1721-1759.	
Ode to Evening	146
How Sleep the Brave	148
COLUM, PADRAIC : b. 1881 (<i>The Macmillan Company, New York</i>) :	
A Cradle Song	148
CORY, W. J. : 1823-1892 (<i>Messrs. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.</i>) :	
Heraclitus	149
Mimnermus in Church	150
COWLEY, ABRAHAM : 1618-1667.	
The Wish	151
**Hymn to Light	152
COWPER, WILLIAM : 1731-1800.	
The Poplar Field	153
Epitaph on a Hare	154
The Castaway	156
CRASHAW, RICHARD : 1613-1649.	
**The Dear Bargain	158
**Verses from the Shepherds' Hymn	159
Upon the Book and the Picture of the Seraphical	
Saint Teresa	161
The Nightingale	162
** Slightly shortened.	

	PAGE
CUNNINGHAM, ALLAN : 1784-1842.	
Hame, Hame, Hame	163
DANIEL, SAMUEL : 1562-1619.	
Let Others Sing	164
DAVENANT, SIR WILLIAM : 1606-1668.	
The Lark now leaves his wat'ry nest	164
DAVIDSON, JOHN (<i>Messrs. John Lane the Bodley Head Ltd.</i>): 1857-1909.	
A Runnable Stag.	165
DAVIES, SIR JOHN : 1569-1626.	
The Littleness of Man	168
DAVIES, W. H. : b. 1870 (<i>Mr. Jonathan Cape</i>):	
The East in Gold	168
Sweet Stay-at-Home	169
Leisure	170
The Kingfisher	170
DEKKER, THOMAS : 1570-1641.	
Content	171
DE LA MARE, WALTER : b. 1873 (<i>*Messrs. Constable & Co., Ltd.</i>) (<i>†Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.</i>):	
*The Linnet	172
*The Ghost	172
*The Three Strangers	173
*Arabia	174
*Before Dawn	175
†The Riddlers	176
DONNE, JOHN : 1573-1631.	
Go and Catch a Falling Star	177
The Unruly Sun	178
The Relique	179
The Good Morrow	181
The Ecstasy	182
The Autumnal	184
The Dream	185
The Anniversary	186
Hymn to God	187
Good Friday	189
Death, be not proud	190

INDEX TO AUTHORS

xli

	PAGE
DOWLAND, JOHN : 1563-1626.	
Tears	190
DRAYTON, MICHAEL : 1563-1631.	
The Parting	191
Immortality in Song	191
A Summer's Eve	192
DRUMMOND, WILLIAM : 1585-1649.	
Madrigal	193
Saint John Baptist	193
Phoebus, Arise	194
DRYDEN, JOHN : 1631-1700.	
A Song for Saint Cecilia's Day	195
ELLIOT, JANE : 1727-1805.	
The Flowers of the Forest	197
FLATMAN, THOMAS : 1637-1688.	
O, the sad Day	198
FLETCHER, JOHN : 1579-1625.	
To his Sleeping Mistress	199
In Praise of Melancholy	200
Man his own Star	200
FORD, JOHN : 1586-1639.	
Calantha's Dirge	201
GODOLPHIN, SIDNEY : 1645-1712.	
The Shepherds' Wonder	201
GOULD, GERALD : b. 1885 (<i>Mr. Basil Blackwell</i>) :	
The Happy Tree	202
GRAHAM, JAMES, MARQUIS OF MONTROSE : 1612-1650.	
An Excellent New Ballad	203
GRAVES, ROBERT : b. 1895 (<i>The Poetry Bookshop</i>) :	
In the Wilderness	204
GRAY, THOMAS : 1716-1771.	
Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard	205
On a Favourite Cat	210

	PAGE
GREENE, ROBERT : 1560-1592.	
Sephastia's Song to her Child	212-
GRENFELL, JULIAN : 1888-1915 (<i>Lord Desborough</i>) :	
Into Battle	213
HARDY, THOMAS : b. 1840 (<i>Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.</i>) :	
The Darkling Thrush	214
At the word " Farewell "	215
To Lizbie Browne	216
The Blinded Bird	219
Shelley's Skylark	219
Summer Schemes	220
HENLEY, WILLIAM ERNEST : 1849-1903 (<i>Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.</i>) :	
London in Gold	221
The Full Sea Rolls	223
Vixi	224
When you are Old	224
The End is the Best of All	225
HERBERT, GEORGE : 1593-1633.	
Virtue	226
The Pulley	226
The Collar	227
Verses from the Easter Hymn	228
Love	229
Employment	229
HERBERT OF CHERBURY, LORD : 1583-1648.	
Elegy	231
HERRICK, ROBERT : 1591-1674.	
To Daffodils	231
The Night Piece : to Julia	232
Upon Julia's Clothes	233
Delight in Disorder	233
To Blossoms	233
Grace for a Child	234
Litany to the Holy Spirit	234

INDEX TO AUTHORS

xliii

	PAGE
HEYWOOD, THOMAS : 1570-1650.	
Pack, Clouds, Away	236
HOOD, THOMAS : 1799-1845.	
The Death-Bed	237
HUEFFER, FORD MADOX : b. 1873 (<i>Mr. Martin Secker</i>) :	
The Portrait	237
HUNT, LEIGH : 1784-1859.	
On a lock of Milton's hair	238
JOHNSON, LIONEL : 1867-1902 (<i>Mr. Elkin Mathews</i>) :	
By the Statue of King Charles at Charing Cross	239
JONES, ROBERT : <i>circ.</i> 1616.	
Lovers' Lore	241
JONSON, BEN : 1573-1637.	
Simplicity	242
Epitaph on the Countess Dowager of Pembroke	242
To Celia	243
It is not growing like a Tree	243
To Diana	244
KEATS, JOHN : 1795-1821.	
Glory and Loveliness have passed away	244
Happy is England	245
To Homer	245
On first looking into Chapman's Homer	246
Fancy	247
In a Drear-nighted December	250
La Belle Dame Sans Merci	251
Ode on a Grecian Urn	252
Ode to a Nightingale	254
Bright Star	257
KING, HENRY : 1592-1669.	
Exequy on his Wife	257
Sic Vita	260

	PAGE
KINGSLEY, CHARLES : 1819-1875.	
Young and Old	261
The Sands of Dee	261
Fret Not	262
KIPLING, RUDYARD : b. 1865 (<i>Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd.</i>) :	
The Last Chantey	263
L'Envoi	266
Recessional	267
LAMB, CHARLES : 1775-1834.	
The Old Familiar Faces	268
LAMB, MARY : 1764-1847.	
Child's Play	269
LANDOR, W. S. : 1775-1864.	
Rose Aylmer	269
Ianthe	269
I Strove with none	270
LAWRENCE, D. H. : b. 1885 (<i>Messrs. Duckworth & Co.</i>) :	
Giorno dei morti	270
LINDSAY, LADY ANNE : 1750-1825.	
Auld Robin Gray	271
LOGAN, JOHN : 1748-1788.	
To the Cuckoo	272
(By some attributed to Michael Bruce).	
LOVELACE, RICHARD : 1618-1658.	
To Althea from Prison	273
To Lucasta going to the Wars	274
LYLY, JOHN : 1554-1606.	
Cupid and my Campaspe	275
MANGAN, J. C. : 1803-1849 (<i>Messrs. M. H. Gill & Son, Ltd.</i>) :	
Dark Rosaleen	275
MARLOWE, CHRISTOPHER : 1564-1593.	
Come live with me	278

INDEX TO AUTHORS

xl v

	PAGE
MARVELL, ANDREW : 1621-1678.	
The Girl describes her Fawn	279
Bermudas	280
An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland	282
The Garden	286
To his Coy Mistress	288
MASEFIELD, JOHN : b. 1876.	
A Little Lower than the Angels	290
The Heavens' Mystery	290
MEREDITH, GEORGE : 1828-1909 (<i>Messrs. Constable & Co., Ltd.</i>) :	
Woodland Peace	291
The Question Whither	292
MEYNELL, ALICE : 1850-1922 (<i>Messrs. Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd.</i>) :	
To the Body	293
MICKLE, WILLIAM JULIUS : 1735-1788.	
There's nae luck about the house	293
MILTON, JOHN : 1608-1674.	
How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth	295
To Mr. Cyriack Skinner upon his Blindness .	296
On His Blindness	296
To his late Wife	297
To the Lady Margaret Ley	298
To Mr. Lawrence	298
On the Late Massacre in Piemont	299
To the Lord General Cromwell	299
When the Assault was intended to the City.	300
On Shakespeare	301
The Invocation to Sabrina	301
The Song of Comus	302
The last Chorus of Comus	304
Lycidas	306
At a Solemn Music	312
On Time	313

	PAGE
MORDANT, MAJOR : 1730-1809.	
Sound, Sound the Clarion	350
MORRIS, WILLIAM : 1834-1896 (<i>Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.</i>) :	
Shameful Death	313
MYERS, FREDERIC W. H. : 1843-1901 (<i>Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.</i>) :	
Simmenthal	315
NASHE, THOMAS : 1567-1601.	
Spring	316
NEWBOLT, SIR HENRY : b. 1862.	
Sacramentum supremum	317
Song from " Dream-Market "	317
NICHOLS, ROBERT : b. 1893 (<i>Messrs. Chatto & Win- dus</i>) :	
The Consummation	318
OWEN, WILFRED : 1893-1918 (<i>Mrs. Owen</i>) :	
Strange Meeting	319
PATMORE, COVENTRY : 1823-1896 (<i>Messrs. G. Bell & Sons, Ltd.</i>) :	
The Toys	320
Remembered Grace	322
PREELE, GEORGE : 1558-1597.	
Farewell to Arms	323
POPE, ALEXANDER : 1688-1744.	
Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady	324
PRIOR, MATTHEW : 1664-1721.	
Song	326
QUARLES, FRANCIS : 1592-1644.	
The Best Beloved	327
Wherefore Hidest Thou Thy Face	328

INDEX TO AUTHORS

xlvi

	PAGE
RALEIGH, SIR WALTER : 1552-1618.	
Time	330
His Pilgrimage	330
ROCHESTER, EARL OF : 1647-1680.	
I cannot change	331
ROSSETTI, CHRISTINA : 1830-1894 (* Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.):	
Up-hill	331
Heaven overmarches Earth and Sea	332
Amor Mundi	332
*Song	334
The Convent Threshold	334
ROSSETTI, DANTE GABRIEL : 1828-1882.	
The Blessed Damozel	339
SASSOON, SIEGFRIED : b. 1886 (Mr. Wm. Heinemann):	
Everyone Sang	343
SCOTT, SIR WALTER : 1771-1832.	
Proud Maisie	344
Where shall the Lover Rest	345
The Rover	346
Coronach	347
The Outlaw	348
SEDLEY, SIR CHARLES : 1639-1701.	
Phyllis is my only Joy	350
SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM : 1564-1616.	
Dreaming of things to come.	351
Since first I saw you	351
Exegi Monumentum	352
Thought's Sessions	352
Short Sunshine	353
Absence	353
Not Passion's Slave	354
The Time is out of joint	354
Time's Conqueror.	355
Love's not Time's Fool	355

	PAGE
SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM (<i>continued</i>):	
The Twilight of my Day	356
Envoy.	356
Time's Changes	357
When I am Dead	357
Where the Bee Sucks	358
Under the Greenwood Tree	358
Sigh no more, Ladies	359
Who is Sylvia	359
It was a Lover and his Lass	360
Take, O, take those lips away	361
O Mistress Mine, where art thou roaming	361
Winter	361
Blow, Blow, thou Winter Wind	362
Crabbed Age and Youth	363
A Dirge	363
Song	364
Fidele's Dirge	364
 SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE: 1792-1822.	
To a Skylark	365
Ode to the West Wind	369
The Cloud	371
Lines written among the Euganean Hills	374
Hymn to Pan	380
The World's great age begins anew	381
Music, when soft voices die	383
The Poet	383
I Fear thy Kisses	384
Love's Philosophy	384
The Indian Serenade	385
Rarely, rarely comest thou	386
The Question	387
One Word is too often profaned	389
Ozymandias.	389
A Song	390
A Dirge	390
To the Moon	391
To Night	391
A Lament	392

SHIRLEY, JAMES : 1596-1666.	
The Glories of our Blood and State	393
SIDNEY, SIR PHILIP : 1554-1586.	
Sleep	393
With how sad Steps	394
My True Love hath my Heart	395
SORLEY, CHARLES HAMILTON (<i>Prof. W. R. Sorley</i>) :	
1895-1915.	
All the Hills and Vales	395
SOUTHWELL, ROBERT : 1561-1595.	
The Burning Babe	396
SPENSER, EDMUND : 1552-1599.	
Prothalamion	398
SQUIRE, J. C. : b. 1884 (<i>Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd.</i>) :	
A Far Placo	403
STEPHENS, JAMES : b. 1882 (<i>Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.</i>) :	
The Snare	406
In the Poppy Field	407
STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS : 1850-1894 (<i>Messrs. Chatto & Windus</i>) :	
The House Beautiful	408
In the Highlands	409
In Memoriam F. A. S.	410
The Celestial Surgeon	411
The Descending Star	411
To S. R. Crockett	412
Requiem	412
SUCKLING, SIR JOHN : 1609-1642.	
Why so Pale and Wan, Fond Lover ?	413
SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES : 1837-1909 (<i>Mr. Wm. Heinemann</i>) :	
Chorus from Atalanta	413
A Forsaken Garden	415
Sleep Eternal (<i>From the "Garden of Proserpine"</i>)	418

	PAGE
TENNYSON, LORD : 1809-1892 (<i>*Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.</i>) :	
The splendour falls on castle walls	419
O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South	420
Tears, idle Tears	421
There rolls the Deep	421
Break, Break, Break	422
Song of the Lotos-Eaters	423
Tithonus	427
Ulysses	430
*Early Spring	432
*Crossing the Bar	434
THOMPSON, FRANCIS : 1859-1907 (<i>Messrs. Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd.</i>) :	
In no Strange Land	435
Daisy	436
TRAHERNE, THOMAS : 1637-1674 (<i>Messrs. P. J. & A. E. Dobell</i>) :	
The Salutation	438
The Ways of Wisdom	440
TURNER, W. J. : b. 1889 (<i>Messrs. Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd.</i>) :	
Romance	441
VAUGHAN, HENRY : 1622-1695.	
**Timber	442
The Retreat	442
Childhood	443
Man	445
The Morning-Watch	446
The Seed growing secretly	447
The Dwelling-Place	448
Within the Veil	449
Peace	450
**The World	451
The Revival	452
WALLER, EDMUND : 1606-1687.	
Go, Lovely Rose	452
Old Age	453

** Shortened.

INDEX TO AUTHORS

li

	PAGE
WASTELL, SIMON : <i>circ.</i> 1600.	
Man's Mortality	454
WATSON, SIR WILLIAM : b. 1858.	
In Laleham Churchyard	456
WEBSTER, JOHN : 1580-1625.	
A Dirge	458
WHITE, J. BLANCO : 1775-1841.	
Mysterious Night	458
WITHER, GEORGE : 1588-1667.	
The Hardy Lover	459
**The Lullaby	460
The Marygold	462
WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM : 1770-1850.	
My Heart leaps up	463
Written in March	463
Written in Early Spring	464
Lucy	465
Nature's Child	465
The Sinking Moon	467
Death in Absence	468
Dead	469
Among all Lovely Things my Love had been	469
To a Young Lady	470
To the Cuckoo	471
The Daffodils	472
To the Skylark	473
Stray Pleasures	473
The Small Celandine	475
She was a Phantom of Delight	476
A Farewell	477
At the Grave of Burns	479
To a Highland Girl at Inversneyde upon Loch Lomond	482

** Slightly shortened.

	PAGE
WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM (<i>continued</i>):	
The Reaper	484
Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey	486
Elegiac Stanzas	491
The Leech-Gatherer	493
Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood	498
Abraham's Bosom	504
Upon Westminster Bridge	505
Inside of King's College Chapel, Cambridge	505
We must be free or die	506
When I have borne in Memory	506
Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland	507
On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic	508
To Toussaint L'Ouverture	508
The Bread of Life	509
Milton	509
The World is too much with us	510
The Inner Vision	510
Blessings be with them	511
After-Thought	511
 WOTTON, SIR HENRY : 1568-1639.	
On his Mistress, the Queen of Bohemia	512
The Character of a Happy Life	512
 YEATS, W. B. : b. 1865 (<i>*Messrs. T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd.</i>) (<i>†Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.</i>):	
†The Song of Wandering Aengus	513
†The Secret Rose	514
†The Wild Swans at Coole	515
*The Sorrow of Love	516
*Aedh wishes for the Cloths of Heaven	517
 ANONYMOUS :	
The Child's Death	517
Feasting the King	518

INDEX TO AUTHORS

liii

	PAGE
ANONYMOUS (<i>continued</i>):	
Love me not for comely grace . . .	519
Since first I saw your Face . . .	519
There is a Lady sweet and kind . . .	520
Fain would I change that note . . .	521
O, waly waly up the Bank . . .	521
Love will find out the Way. . .	523
Helen of Kirconnell . . .	524
Madrigal . . .	525
As ye came from the Holy Land . . .	526
If all the World were Paper . . .	527
Peace . . .	528
Chloris in the Snow . . .	529
The Love-Call . . .	530
A Lyke-Wake Dirge . . .	532

SHAKESPEARE TO HARDY

THE TWILIGHT OF EARTH

THE wonder of the world is o'er :

The magic from the sea is gone :
There is no unimagined shore,
No islet yet to venture on.
The Sacred Hazels' blooms are shed,
The Nuts of Knowledge harvested.

Oh, what is worth this lore of age
If time shall never bring us back
Our battle with the gods to wage
Reeling along the starry track.
The battle rapture here goes by
In warring upon things that die.

Let be the tale of him whose love
Was sighed between white Deirdre's breasts,
It will not lift the heart above
The sodden clay on which it rests.
Love once had power the gods to bring
All rapt on its wild wandering.

We shiver in the falling dew,
And seek a shelter from the storm :
When man these elder brothers knew
He found the mother nature warm,
A hearth fire blazing through it all,
A home without a circling wall.

We dwindle down beneath the skies,
And from ourselves we pass away :
The paradise of memories
Grows ever fainter day by day.
The shepherd stars have shrunk within,
The World's great night will soon begin.

Will no one, ere it is too late,
Ere fades the last memorial gleam,
Recall for us our earlier state ?
For nothing but so vast a dream
That it would scale the steeps of air
Could rouse us from so vast despair.

The power is ours to make or mar
Our fate as on the earliest morn,
The Darkness and the Radiance are
Creatures within the spirit born.
Yet, bathed in gloom too long, we might
Forget how we imagined light.

Not yet are fixed the prison bars ;
The hidden light the spirit owns
If blown to flame would dim the stars
And they who rule them from their thrones :
And the proud sceptred spirits thence
Would bow to pay us reverence.

Oh, while the glory sinks within
Let us not wait on earth behind,
But follow where it flies, and win
The glow again, and we may find
Beyond the Gateways of the Day
Dominion and ancestral sway.

A. E.

QUIET WORK

ONE lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee—
One lesson that in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties served in one,
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity—
Of Toil unsever'd from Tranquillity :
Of Labour, that in lasting fruit outgrows^t
Far noisier schemes, accomplish'd in Repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.
Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's senseless uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy quiet ministers move on,
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting ;
Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil ;
Labourers that shall not fail, when man is gone.

Matthew Arnold

SHAKESPEARE

OTHERS abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask : Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill

That to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the Heaven of Heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality :
And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honoured, self-
secure,
Didst tread on Earth unguess'd at. Better so !
All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness that impairs, all griefs that bow,
Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.

Matthew Arnold

TO A FRIEND

Who prop, you ask, in these bad days, my mind ?
He much, the old man, who, clearest-soul'd of men,
Saw The Wide Prospect, and the Asian Fen,
And Tmolus hill, and Smyrna bay, though blind.
Much he, whose friendship I not long since won,
That halting slave, who in Nicopolis
Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal son
Clear'd Rome of what most shamed him. But
be his
My special thanks, whose even-balanced soul,
From first youth tested up to extreme old age,
Business could not make dull, nor passion wild :
Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole :
The mellow glory of the Attic stage ;
Singer of sweet Colonus, and its child.

Matthew Arnold

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away ;
Down and away below.
Now my brothers call from the bay ;
Now the great winds shorewards blow ;
Now the salt tides seawards flow ;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away.

This way, this way.

Call her once before you go.

Call once yet.

In a voice that she will know :

" Margaret ! Margaret ! "

Children's voices should be dear

(Call once more) to a mother's ear :

Children's voices, wild with pain.

Surely she will come again.

Call her once and come away.

This way, this way.

" Mother dear, we cannot stay. "

The wild white horses foam and fret.

Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down.

Call no more.

One last look at the white-walled town,

And the little grey church on the windy shore.

Then come down.

She will not come though you call all day.

Come away, come away.

Children dear, was it yesterday

We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?

In the caverns where we lay,

Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell ?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep ;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam ;
Where the salt weed sways in the stream ;
Where the sea-beasts ranged all round
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine ;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and ay ?
When did music come this way ?
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away ?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green
sea.

She said : " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
I said : " Go up, dear heart, through the waves.
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-
caves."

She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone ?

"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say.
Come," I said, and we rose through the surf in the
bay.

We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled
town.

Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their
prayers,

But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones, worn
with rains,

And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded
panes.

She sate by the pillar ; we saw her clear :

"Margaret, hist ! come quick, we are here,

Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone.

The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."

But, ah, she gave me never a look,

For her eyes were sealed to the holy book.

Loud prays the priest ; shut stands the door.

Come away, children, call no more.

Come away, come down, call no more.

Down, down, down,

Down to the depths of the sea.

She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.

Hark, what she sings : "O joy, O joy,

For the humming street, and the child with its toy.

For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well,

For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun."
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully.
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the
sand ;
And over the sand at the sea ;
And her eyes are set in a stare ;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh,
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children.
Come, children, come down.
The hoarse wind blows colder ;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door ;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing, " Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she.
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea,"

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow ;
When clear falls the moonlight ;
When spring-tides are low :
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom ;
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom :
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town ;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down,
Singing : “ There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she !
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea.”

Matthew Arnold

TO MARGUERITE

YES ! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone*.
The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.
But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing ;

And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour—

Oh ! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent ;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent !
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
Oh might our marges meet again !

Who order'd, that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd ?
Who renders vain their deep desire ?—
A God, a God their severance ruled !
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.

Matthew Arnold

THE SONG OF CALLICLES ON ETNA

THROUGH the black, rushing smoke-bursts,
Thick breaks the red flame ;
All Etna heaves fiercely
Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo !
Are haunts meet for thee.
But, where Helicon breaks down
In cliff to the sea.

Where the moon-silver'd inlets
Send far their light voice
Up the still dale of Thisbe,
O speed, and rejoice !

On the sward at the cliff-top
Lie strewn the white flocks ;
On the cliff-side the pigeons
Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,
Soft lull'd by the rills,
Lie wrapt in their blankets,
Asleep on the hills.

—What forms are these coming
So white through the gloom ?
What garments out-glistening
The gold-flower'd broom ?

What sweet-breathing presence
Out-perfumes the thyme ?
What voices enrapture
The night's balmy prime ?—

'Tis Apollo comes leading
His choir, the Nine.
—The leader is fairest,
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows !
They stream up again !
What seeks on this mountain
The glorified train ?—

They bathe on this mountain,
In the spring by their road ;
Then on to Olympus,
Their endless abode !

—Whose praise do they mention ?
Of what is it told ?—
What will be for ever ;
What was from of old.
First hymn they the Father
Of all things ;—and then
The rest of immortals,
The action of men ;
The day in his hotness,
The strife with the palm :
The night in her silence,
The stars in their calm.

Matthew Arnold

REQUIESCAT

STREW on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew.
In quiet she reposes :
Ah ! would that I did too.
Her mirth the world required :
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.
Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound.
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.
Her cabined, ample Spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty Hall of Death.

Matthew Arnold

PHILOMELA

HARK! ah, the Nightingale!
The tawny-throated!
Hark! from that moonlit cedar what a burst!
What triumph! hark—what pain!

O Wanderer from a Grecian shore,
Still, after many years, in distant lands,
Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain
That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken, old-world
pain—

Say, will it never heal?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees and night,
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy rack'd heart and brain
Afford no balm?

Dost thou to-night behold
Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild?

Dost thou again peruse
With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb Sister's shame?

Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor Fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale?

Listen, Eugenia—
How thick the bursts come crowding through the
leaves!

Again—thou hearest !
Eternal Passion !
Eternal Pain !

Matthew Arnold

DOVER BEACH

THE sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits ;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone ; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night air !
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd sand,
Listen ! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery ; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd ;
But now I only hear

Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here, as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Matthew Arnold

THE SCHOLAR GIPSY

"There was very lately a lad in the University of Oxford, who was by his poverty forced to leave his studies there; and at last to join himself to a company of vagabond gipsies. Among these extravagant people, by the insinuating subtilty of his carriage, he quickly got so much of their love and esteem as that they discovered to him their mystery. After he had been a pretty while well exercised in the trade, there chanced to ride by a couple of scholars, who had formerly been of his acquaintance. They quickly spied out their old friend among the gipsies; and he gave them an account of the necessity which drove him to that kind of life, and told them that the people he went with were not such impostors as they were taken for, but that they had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of imagination, their fancy binding that of others: that himself had learned much of their art, and when he had compassed the whole secret, he intended, he said, to leave their company, and give the world an account of what he had learned."—GLANVIL'S *Vanity of Dogmatizing*, 1661.

Go, for they call you, Shepherd, from the hill;
Go, Shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes:
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,

Nor the cropp'd grasses shoot another head.

But when the fields are still,

And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,

And only the white sheep are sometimes seen

Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanch'd
green ;

Come, Shepherd, and again renew the quest.

Here, where the reaper was at work of late—

In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves

His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruse,

And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,

Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use—

Here will I sit and wait,

While to my ear from uplands far away

The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,

With distant cries of reapers in the corn—

All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screen'd is this nook o'er the high, half-reap'd field,

And here till sun-down, shepherd, will I be !

Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,

And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see

Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep ;

And air-swept lindens yield

Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed
showers

Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,

And bower me from the August sun with shade ;

And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers.

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book—

Come, let me read the oft-read tale again !

The story of that Oxford scholar poor,

Of shining parts and quick inventive brain,

Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the gipsy lore,
And roam'd the world with that wild brother-
hood,
And came, as most men deem'd, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country-lanes,
Two scholars whom at college erst he knew
Met him, and of his way of life inquir'd.
Whereat he answer'd, that the gipsy crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains ;
And they can bind them to what thoughts they will.
" And I," he said, " the secret of their art,
When fully learn'd, will to the world impart ;
But it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill ! "

This said, he left them, and return'd no more.—
But rumours hung about the country-side
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of grey,
The same the gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring ;
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-frock'd
boors
Had found him seated at their entering,

But, mid their drink and clatter, he would fly ;—
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, wanderer, on thy trace ;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks

I ask if thou hast pass'd their quiet place ;
Or in my boat I lie
Moor'd to the cool bank in the summer heats,
Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm green-muffled Cumner
hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground !
Thence, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bablock-hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the punt's rope chops round ;
And leaning backward in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wychwood
bowers,
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream !

And then they land, and thou art seen no more.
Maidens who from the distant hamlets come
To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee
roam,
Or cross a stile into the public way.
Oft thou hast given them store
Of flowers—the frail-leaf'd, white anemone—
Dark bluebells drench'd with dews of summer
eves—
And purple orchises with spotted leaves—
But none has words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,

Men who through those wide fields of breezy
grass
Where black-wing'd swallows haunt the glittering
Thames,
To bathe in the abandon'd lasher pass,
Have often pass'd thee near
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown :
Mark'd thy outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air ;
But, when they came from bathing, thou wert
gone.

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes and late
For cresses from the rills,
Have known thee watching, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding kine ;
And mark'd thee, when the stars come out and
shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In Autumn, on the skirts of Bagley wood,
Where most the Gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you
see
With scarlet patches tagg'd and shreds of grey,
Above the forest-ground call'd Thessaly—
The blackbird picking food
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all !
So often has he known thee past him stray
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a wither'd spray,
And waiting for the spark from Heaven to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers
go,
Have I not pass'd thee on the wooden bridge
Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
Thy face toward Hinksey and its wintry ridge ?
And thou hast climb'd the hill
And gain'd the white brow of the Cumner range ;
Turn'd once to watch, while thick the snow-
flakes fall,
The line of festal light in Christ-Church hall—
Then sought thy straw in some sequester'd
grange.

But what—I dream ! Two hundred years are
flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wander'd from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy tribe.
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid !
Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown
grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave—
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours !
For what wears out the life of mortal men ?
'Tis that from change to change their being
rolls ;
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
And numb the elastic powers.

Till having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tired upon a thousand schemes our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are—what we have been.

Thou hast not lived, why should'st thou perish, so ?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire :
Else wert thou long since number'd with the
dead—

Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire.
The generations of thy peers are fled,
And we ourselves shall go ;
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
Because thou hadst—what we, alas, have not.

For early didst thou leave the world, with powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
Firm to their mark, not spent on other things ;
Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much been
baffled, brings.

O Life unlike to ours !
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he
strives,
And each half lives a hundred different lives ;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from Heaven : and we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly will'd,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,

Whose vague resolves never have been fulfill'd ;
For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new ;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day—
Ah, do not we, Wanderer, await it too ?

Yes ! we await it, but it still delays,
And then we suffer ! and amongst us one,
Who most has suffer'd, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne ;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days ;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the
head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest ! and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear,
With close-lipp'd patience for our only friend,
Sad patience, too near neighbour to despair ;
But none has hope like thine !
Thou through the fields and through the woods
dost stray,
Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames ;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,

Its heads o'ertax'd, its palsied hearts, was
rife—

Fly hence, our contact fear!
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood!
Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in Hades
turn,
Wave us away, and keep thy solitude!

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silver'd branches of the glade—
Far on the forest-skirts, where none pursue,
On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales,
Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales.

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!
For strong the infection of our mental strife,
Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils
for rest;
And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfix'd thy powers,
And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made:
And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
Fade, and grow old at last and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles!
—As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
Descried at sunrise an emerging prow

Lifting the cool-hair'd creepers stealthily,
The fringes of a southward-facing brow
Among the Ægean isles ;
And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
Freighted with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
Green bursting figs, and tunnies steep'd in
brine ;
And knew the intruders on his ancient home,
The young light-hearted Masters of the waves ;
And snatch'd his rudder, and shook out more sail,
And day and night held on indignantly
O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,
Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
To where the Atlantic raves
Outside the Western Straits, and unbent sails
There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets
of foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come ;
And on the beach undid his corded bales.

Matthew Arnold

SELF-DEPENDENCE

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At the vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the star-lit sea.
And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send :
" Ye who from my childhood up have calm'd me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end.
" Ah, once more," I cried, " Ye Stars, Ye Waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew :

Still, still, let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you."

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heav'n
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer—
"Would'st thou *be* as these are? *live* as they.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

"And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silver'd roll.
For alone they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unobservant
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born Voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear.
"Resolve to be thyself: and know that he
Who finds himself loses his misery."

Matthew Arnold

THE BURIED LIFE

LIGHT flows our war of mocking words, and yet,
Behold, with tears my eyes are wet.
I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll.

Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,
We know, we know that we can smile;

But there's a something in this breast
To which thy light words bring no rest,
And thy gay smiles no anodyne.

Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,
And turn those limpid eyes on mine,
And let me read there, love, thy inmost soul.

Ah, well for us, if even we,
Even for a moment, can get free
Our heart, and have our lips unchain'd :
For that which seals them hath been deep or-
dain'd.

But often, in the world's most crowded streets,
But often, in the din of strife,
There rises an unspeakable desire
After the knowledge of our buried life,
A thirst to spend our fire and restless force
In tracking out our true, original course ;
A longing to inquire
Into the mystery of this heart that beats
So wild, so deep in us, to know
Whence our thoughts come and whence they go.

And then we will no more be racked
With inward striving, and demand
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour
Their stupefying power ;
Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call :
Yet still, from time to time, vague and forlorn,
From the soul's subterranean depth upborne
As from an infinitely distant land,
Come airs, and floating echoes, and convey
A melancholy into all our day.

Only—but this is rare—
When a belovèd hand is laid in ours,
When, jaded with the rush and glare
Of the interminable hours,
Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,
When our world-deafen'd ear
Is by the tones of a lov'd voice caress'd,—
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast
And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again :
The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,
And what we mean, we say, and what we would,
we know.
A man becomes aware of his life's flow,
And hears its winding murmur, and he sees
The meadows where it glides, the sun, the breeze.

And there arrives a lull in the hot race
Wherein he doth for ever chase
That flying and elusive shadow, Rest.
An air of coolness plays upon his face,
And an unwonted calm pervades his breast.
And then he thinks he knows
The Hills where his life rose,
And the Sea where it goes.

Matthew Arnold

MEMORIAL VERSES

APRIL, 1850

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,
Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.
But one such death remain'd to come.
The last poetic voice is dumb.
We stand to day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,
We bow'd our head and held our breath.
He taught us little : but our soul
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.
With shivering heart the strife we saw
Of passion with Eternal Law.
And yet with reverential awe
We watch'd the fount of fiery life
Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said—
Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.
Physician of the Iron Age
Goethe has done his pilgrimage.
He took the suffering human race,
He read each wound, each weakness clear—
And struck his finger on the place
And said—Thou ailest here, and here.—
He look'd on Europe's dying hour
Of fitful dream and feverish power ;
His eye plunged down the weltering strife,
The turmoil of expiring life ;
He said—The end is everywhere :
Art still has truth, take refuge there.—
And he was happy, if to know
Causes of things, and far below
His feet to see the lurid flow
Of terror, and insane distress,
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth !—Ah, pale ghosts ! rejoice !
For never has such soothing voice
Been to your shadowy world convey'd,
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade

Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.

Wordsworth is gone from us—and ye,
Ah, may ye feel his voice as we.
He too upon a wintry clime
Had fallen—on this iron time
Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
He found us when the age had bound
Our souls in its benumbing round :
He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.
He laid us as we lay at birth
On the cool flowery lap of earth,
Smiles broke from us and we had ease ;
The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again ;
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
Our youth return'd ; for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead,
Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,
The freshness of the early world.

Ah ! since dark days still bring to light
Man's prudence and man's fiery might,
Time may restore us in his course
Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force ;
But where will Europe's latter hour
Again find Wordsworth's healing power ?
Others will teach us how to dare,
And against fear our breast to steel ;
Others will strengthen us to bear—
But who, ah ! who, will make us feel ?
The cloud of mortal destiny,
Others will front it fearlessly—
But who, like him, will put it by ?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rotha, with thy living wave !
Sing him thy best ! for few or none
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

Matthew Arnold

RUGBY CHAPEL

NOVEMBER, 1857

COLDLY, sadly descends
The autumn evening ! The field
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
Of wither'd leaves, and the elms,
Fade into dimness apace,
Silent ;—hardly a shout
From a few boys late at their play !
The lights come out in the street,
In the school-room windows ; but cold,
Solemn, unlighted, austere,
Through the gathering darkness, arise
The chapel-walls, in whose bound
Thou, my father ! art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom
Of the autumn evening. But ah !
That word, *gloom*, to my mind
Brings thee back in the light
Of thy radiant vigour again !
In the gloom of November we pass'd
Days not of gloom at thy side ;
Seasons impair'd not the ray
Of thine even cheerfulness clear.
Such thou wast ! and I stand
In the autumn evening, and think
Of bygone autumns with thee.

Fifteen years have gone round
Since thou arosest to tread,
In the summer morning, the road
Of death, at a call unforeseen,
Sudden! For fifteen years
We, who till then in thy shade
Restored as under the boughs
Of a mighty oak, have endured
Sunshine and rain as we might,
Bare, unshaded, alone,
Lacking the shelter of thee!

O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now? For that force,
Surely, has not been left vain!
Somewhere, surely, afar,
In the sounding labour-house vast
Of being, is practised that strength,
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
Conscious or not of the past,
Still thou performest the word
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live—
Prompt, unwearied, as here!
Still thou upraisest with zeal
The humble good from the ground,
Sternly represses the bad!
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse
Those who with half-open eyes
Tread the borderland dim
'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st,
Succourest!—this was thy work,
This was thy life upon earth.

And through thee I believe
In the noble and great who are gone ;
Pure souls honour'd and blest
By former ages, who else—
Such, so soulless, so poor
Is the race of men whom I see—
Seem'd but a dream of the heart,
Seem'd but a cry of desire.
Yes ! I believe that there lived
Others like thee in the past,
Not like the men of the crowd
Who all round me to-day
Bluster or cringe, and make life
Hideous, and arid, and vile ;
But souls temper'd with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good,
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God !—or sons
Shall I not call you ? because
Not as servants ye knew
Your Father's innermost mind,
His, who unwillingly sees
One of his little ones lost—
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died !
See ! in the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line !
Where are they tending ?—A God
Marshall'd them, gave them their goal.—
Ah, but the way is so long !
Years they have been in the wild !

Sore thirst plagues them ; the rocks,
Rising all round, overawe.
Factions divide them—their host
Threatens to break, to dissolve.
Ah, keep, keep them combined !
Else, of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive !
Sole they shall stray ; in the rocks
Labour for ever in vain,
Die one by one in the waste.
Then, in such hour of need
Of your fainting, dispirited race,
Ye, like angels, appear,
Radiant with ardour divine.
Beacons of hope, ye appear !
Languor is not in your heart,
Weakness is not in your word,
Weariness not on your brow.
Ye alight in our van ! at your voice,
Panic, despair, flee away.
Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, re-inspire the brave !
Order, courage, return.
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
Follow your steps as ye go.
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
Strengthening the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march,
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the City of God !

Matthew Arnold

A SUMMER NIGHT

IN the deserted moon-blanch'd street
How lonely rings the echo of my feet !

Those windows, which I gaze at, frown,
Silent and white, unopening down,
Repellent as the world ;—but see !

A break between the housetops shows
The moon, and, lost behind her, fading dim
Into the dewy dark obscurity

Down at the far horizon's rim,
Doth a whole tract of heaven disclose.

And to my mind the thought
Is on a sudden brought
Of a past night, and a far different scene.
Headlands stood out into the moon-lit deep

As clearly as at noon ;
The spring-tide's brimming flow
Heaved dazzlingly between ;

Houses with long white sweep
Girdled the glistening bay ;
Behind, through the soft air,
The blue haze-cradled mountains spread away.
That night was far more fair—
But the same restless pacings to and fro,
And the same vainly throbbing heart was there
And the same bright calm moon.

And the calm moonlight seems to say :
*Hast thou then still the old unquiet breast,
Which never deadens into rest,
Nor ever feels the fiery glow
That whirls the spirit from itself away,
But fluctuates to and fro,
Never by passion quite possess'd,*

And never quite benumb'd by the world's sway?

And I, I know not if to pray
Still to be what I am, or yield, and be
Like all the other men I see.

For most men in a brazen prison live,
Where in the sun's hot eye,
With heads bent o'er their toil, they languidly
Their lives to some unmeaning taskwork give,
Dreaming of nought beyond their prison wall.
And as, year after year,
Fresh products of their barren labour fall
From their tired hands, and rest
Never yet comes more near,
Gloom settles slowly down over their breast;
And while they try to stem
The waves of mournful thought by which they are
prest,
Death in their prison reaches them,
Unfreed, having seen nothing, still unblest.

And the rest, a few,
Escape their prison, and depart
On the wide ocean of life anew.
There the freed prisoner, where'er his heart
Listeth, will sail;
Nor doth he know how there prevail,
Despotic on that sea,
Trade-winds which cross it from eternity.
Awhile he holds some false way, undebarr'd
By thwarting signs, and braves
The freshening wind and blackening waves.

And then the tempest strikes him ; and between
The lightning-bursts is seen
Only a driving wreck,
And the pale master on his spar-strewn deck
With anguish'd face and flying hair
Grasping the rudder hard,
Still bent to make some port he knows not where,
Still standing for some false impossible shore.
And sterner comes the roar
Of sea and wind, and through the deepening gloom
Fainter and fainter wreck and helmsman loom,
And he too disappears, and comes no more.

Is there no life, but these alone ?
Madman or slave, must man be one ?

Plainness and clearness without shadow of stain !
Clearness divine !
Ye heavens, whose pure dark regions have no sign
Of languor, though so calm, and though so great
Are yet untroubled and unpassionate !
Who, though so noble, share in the world's toil,
And, though so task'd, keep free from dust and soil !
I will not say that your mild deeps retain
A tinge, it may be, of their silent pain
Who have long'd deeply once, and long'd in vain ;
But I will rather say that you remain
A world above man's head, to let him see
How boundless might his soul's horizons be,
How vast, yet of what clear transparency !
How it were good to live there, and breathe free !
How fair a lot to fill
Is left to each man still !

Matthew Arnold

THE FUTURE

A WANDERER is man from his birth.
He was born in a ship
On the breast of the river of Time ;
Brimming with wonder and joy
He spreads out his arms to the light,
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the stream.
As what he sees is, so have his thoughts been.
Whether he wakes
Where the snowy mountainous pass,
Echoing the screams of the eagles,
Hems in its gorges the bed
Of the new-born clear-flowing stream ;
Whether he first sees light
Where the river in gleaming rings
Sluggishly winds through the plain ;
Whether in sound of the swallowing sea—
As is the world on the banks,
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each as he glides
Fable and dream
Of the lands which the river of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been clos'd.
Only the tract where he sails
He wots of ; only the thoughts,
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time ?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough ?
Who thinks as they thought,

The tribes who then roam'd on her breast,
Her vigorous primitive sons ?

What girl

Now reads in her bosom as clear
As Rebekah read, when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well ?
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure ?

What bard,

At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near,
As flashing as Moses felt,
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste ?
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him ?

This tract which the river of Time
Now flows through with us, is the plain.
Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.
Border'd by cities, and hoarse
With a thousand cries is its stream.
And we on its breast, our minds
Are confused as the cries which we hear,
Changing and shot as the sights which we see.

And we say that repose has fled
For ever the course of the river of Time.
That cities will crowd to its edge
In a blacker incessanter line ;
That the din will be more on its banks,
Denser the trade on its stream,

Flatter the plain where it flows,
Fiercer the sun overhead.
That never will those on its breast
See an ennobling sight,
Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed.

Haply, the river of Time,
As it grows, as the towns on its marge
Fling their wavering lights
On a wider, statelier stream—
May acquire, if not the calm
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

And the width of the waters, the hush
Of the grey expanse where he floats,
Freshening its current and spotted with foam
As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
Peace to the soul of the man on its breast ;
As the pale waste widens around him—
As the banks fade dimmer away—
As the stars come out, and the night-wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite Sea.

Matthew Arnold

VANITAS VANITATUM

THE World's a bubble ; and the life of Man
Less than a span :
In his conception wretched—from the womb
So to the tomb ;

Curst from the cradle, and brought up to years

With cares and fears.

Who then to frail mortality shall trust

But limns the water, or but writes in dust.

Yet since with sorrow here we live opprest,

What life is best ?

Courts are but only superficial schools

To dandle fools ;

The rural parts are turned into a den

Of savage men ;

And where's the city from all vice so free

But may be termed the worst of all the three ?

Domestic cares afflict the husband's bed,

Or pains his head :

Those that live single take it for a curse,

Or do things worse :

These would have children ; those that have them
moan,

Or wish them gone :

What is it then, to have, or have no wife,

But single thralldom, or a double strife ?

Our own affections still at home to please

Is a disease ;

To cross the seas to any foreign soil,

Perils and toil ;

Wars with their noise affright us : when they
cease,

We're worse in peace :

—What then remains, but that we still should cry

Not to be born, or, being born, to die ?

Francis Bacon

AN ODE

As it fell upon a day
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made,
Beasts did leap and birds did sing,
Trees did grow and plants did spring ;
Every thing did banish moan
Save the Nightingale alone.
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Lean'd her breast up-till a thorn,
And there sung the dolefull'st ditty
That to hear it was great pity.
" Fic, fie, fie," now would she cry ;
" Teru, teru," by and by :
That to hear her so complain
Scarce I could from tears refrain,
For her griefs so lively shown
Made me think upon mine own.
—Ah, thought I, thou mourn'st in vain,
None takes pity on thy pain :
Senseless trees, they cannot hear thee,
Ruthless beasts, they will not cheer thee ;
King Pandion, he is dead,
All thy friends are lapp'd in lead :
All thy fellow birds do sing
Careless of thy sorrowing.

Richard Barnefield

IN THE SPRING

My love is the maïd ov all maïdens,
Though all mid be comely,
Her skin's lik' the jessamy blossom
A-spread in the Spring.

Her smile is so sweet as a baby's
Young smile on his mother,
Her eyes be as bright as the dew drop
A-shed in the Spring.

O grey-leafy pinks o' the geården,
Now bear her sweet blossoms ;
Now deck wi' a rrose-bud, O briar,
Her head in the Spring.

O light-rollèn wind, blow me hither
The vaíce ov her talkèn,
O bring vrom her veet the light doust
She do tread in the Spring.

O zun, meåke the gil'cups all glitter
In goold all around her,
An' meåke o' the deåisys' white flowers
A bed in the Spring.

O whistle, gay birds, up bezide her,
In drong-way ¹ an' woodlands,
O zing, swingèn lark, now the clouds
Be a-vied ² in the Spring !

William Barnes

WOAK HILL

WHEN sycamore leaves wer a-spreadèn,
Green-ruddy, in hedges,
Beside the red doust o' the ridges,
A-dried at Woak Hill :

¹ Hedged-track.

² Flown.

I packed up my goods all a-sheenèn
Wi' long years o' handlen,
On dousty red wheels ov a waggon,
To ride at Woak Hill.

The brown thatchen ruf o' the dwellèn,
I then wer a-leävèn,
Had shelter'd the sleek head o' Meäry,
My bride at Woak Hill.

But now vor some years, her light voot-vall
'S a-lost vrom the vloorèn.
Too soon vor my jay an' my children,
She died at Woak Hill.

But still I do think that, in soul,
She do hover about us :
To ho vor her motherless childern,
Her pride at Woak Hill.

Zoo—lest she should tell me hereafter
I stole off 'ithout her,
An' left her, uncall'd at house-riddèn,
To bide at Woak Hill—

I call'd her so fondly, wi' lippèns
All soundless to others,
An' took her wi' air-reachèn hand,
To my side at Woak Hill.

William Barnes

MEDITATION

(On the Tombs in Westminster Abbey)

MORTALITY, behold and fear !
What a change of flesh is here !
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within this heap of stones ;

Here they lie had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands ;
Where from their pulpits sealed with dust
They preach :—" In greatness is no trust."
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royall'st seed
That the earth did e'er suck in,
Since the first man died for sin !
Here the bones of birth have cried :—
" Though gods they were, as men they died."
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruined sides of kings.
Here's a world of pomp and state,
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

Francis Beaumont

THE SOUTH COUNTRY

WHEN I am living in the Midlands,
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening ;
My work is left behind ;
And the great hills of the South Country
Come back into my mind.
The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea,
And it's there, walking in the high woods,
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.
The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day ;
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,

Their skies are fast and grey ;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.
The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the rocks
And the oldest kind of song.
But the men that live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise,
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our sister the Spring
When over the sea she flies ;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
She blesses us with surprise.
I never get between the pines
But I smell the Sussex air ;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there,
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.
A lost thing could I never find,
Nor a broken thing mend ;
And I fear I shall be all alone
When I get towards the end.
Who will there be to comfort me
Or who will be my friend ?
I will gather and carefully make my friends
Of the men of the Sussex Weald ;
They watch the stars from silent folds,
They stiffly plough the field.

By them and the God of the South Country
My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
Or if ever I grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood,
Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

Hilaire Belloc

COELI ENARRANT

THE heavens declare the glory of God : and the
firmament sheweth his handy-work.

One day telleth another : and one night certifieth
another.

There is neither speech nor language : but their
voices are heard among them.

Their sound is gone out into all lands : and their
words unto the ends of the world.

In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun :
which cometh forth as a bridegroom out of
his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run
his course.

It goeth forth from the uttermost part of the
heaven, and runneth about unto the end of
it again : and there is nothing hid from the
heat thereof.

The law of the Lord is an undefiled law, converting
the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure,
and giveth wisdom unto the simple.

The statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the heart : the commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth light unto the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever : the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb.

Moreover, by them is thy servant taught : and in keeping of them there is great reward.

Who can tell how oft he offendeth : O cleanse thou me from my secret faults.

Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over me : so shall I be undefiled, and innocent from the great offence.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart : be alway acceptable in Thy sight.

O Lord : my strength, and my redeemer.

The English Bible ¹

MEMENTO CREATORIS TUI

REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,

While the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh,

When thou shalt say :—I have no pleasure in them ;
While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened.

Nor the clouds return after the rain :

¹ Prayer Book Version.

In the day when the keepers of the house shall
tremble,

And the strong men shall bow themselves,
And the grinders cease because they are few,
And those that look out of the windows be darkened,
And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when
the sound of the grinding is low,
And he shall rise up at the voice of the bird,
And all the daughters of music shall be brought
low ;

Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high,
And fears shall be in the way,
And the almond tree shall flourish,
And the grasshopper shall be a burden,
And desire shall fail :

Because man goeth to his long home,
And the mourners go about the streets :
Or ever the silver cord be loosed,
Or the golden bowl be broken,
Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain,
Or the wheel broken at the cistern.
Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was :
And the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

The English Bible

INCLYTI ISRAEL

THE beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places :
How are the mighty fallen !
Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Askelon ;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.
Ye mountains of Gilboa,

Let there be no dew, neither let there be rain,
upon you, nor fields of offerings ;
For there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast
away,
The shield of Saul, as though he had not been
anointed with oil.
From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the
mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.
Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in
their lives,
And in their death they were not divided :
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.
Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights,
Who put on ornaments of gold on your apparel.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the
battle !
O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places.
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan :
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me :
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished !

The English Bible

SUPER FLUMINA

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept :
when we remembered thee, O Sion.
As for our harps, we hanged them up : upon the
trees that are therein.

For they that led us away captive required of us
then a song, and melody, in our heaviness :
Sing us one of the songs of Sion.

How shall we sing the Lord's song : in a strange
land ?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem : let my right hand
forget her cunning.

If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave
to the roof of my mouth : yea, if I prefer not
Jerusalem in my mirth.

Remember the children of Edom, O Lord, in the
day of Jerusalem : how they said, Down
with it, down with it, even to the ground.

O daughter of Babylon, wasted with misery : yea,
happy shall he be that rewardeth thee, as thou
hast served us.

Blessed shall he be that taketh thy children : and
throweth them against the stones.

The English Bible ¹

DOMINUS REGIT ME

THE Lord is my shepherd ; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures :

He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul :

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for
his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death,

I will fear no evil ; for thou art with me :

Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence
of mine enemies :

¹ Prayer Book Version.

Thou anointest my head with oil ; my cup runneth
over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the
days of my life :

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

The English Bible

FOR THE FALLEN

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.

Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill : Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.

There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were
young,

Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.

They were staunch to the end against odds un-
counted,

They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old :

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades
again ;

They sit no more at familiar tables at home :

They have no lot in our labour of the day-time ;

They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are
known
As the stars are known to the Night.

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in the time of our
darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

Laurence Binyon

I GIVE YOU THE END OF A GOLDEN STRING

I GIVE you the end of a golden string
Only wind it into a ball,—
It will lead you in at Heaven's gate
Built in Jerusalem's wall.

William Blake

A SONG OF SINGING

PIPING down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me :—

“ Pipe a song about a Lamb ! ”
So I piped with merry cheer.
“ Piper, pipe that song again.”
So I piped : he wept to hear.

“ Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe ;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer ! ”
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.
“ Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.”
So he vanished from my sight ;
And I plucked a hollow reed,
And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

William Blake

HOW SWEET I ROAMED

How sweet I roamed from field to field,
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the Prince of Love beheld
Who in the sunny beams did glide !
He showed me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow ;
He led me through his gardens fair
Where all his golden pleasures grow.
With sweet May-dews my wings were wet,
And Phœbus fired my vocal rage ;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.
He loves to sit and hear me sing ;
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me ;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty.

William Blake

INFANT JOY

" I HAVE no name ;
I am but two days old."
—What shall I call thee ?
" I happy am ;
Joy is my name."
—Sweet joy befall thee !

Pretty joy !
Sweet joy, but two days old ;
Sweet joy I call thee ;
Thou dost smile :
I sing the while,
Sweet joy befall thee !

William Blake

INFANT SORROW

My mother groaned, my father wept,
Into the dangerous world I leapt,
Helpless, naked, piping loud,
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my father's hands,
Striving against my swaddling bands,
Bound and weary, I thought best
To sulk upon my mother's breast.

William Blake

TO THE EVENING STAR

THOU fair-hair'd angel of the Evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy brilliant torch of love ; thy radiant crown

Put on, and smile upon our evening bed !
Smile on our loves ; and whilst thou drawest round
The curtains of the sky, scatter thy dew
On every flower that closes its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake ; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dust with silver. Soon, full soon
Dost thou withdraw ; then the wolf rages wide,
And then the lion glares through the dun forest.
The fleeces of our flocks are covered with
Thy sacred dew : protect them with thine influence.

William Blake

SPRING

SOUND the flute !
Now 'tis mute ;
Birds delight,
Day and night,
Nightingale
In the dale,
Lark in sky—
Merrily,
Merrily, merrily to welcome in the year.

Little boy,
Full of joy ;
Little girl,
Sweet and small,
Cock does crow,
So do you ;
Merry voice,
Infant noise ;
Merrily, merrily to welcome in the year.

Little lamb,
Here I am ;
Come and lick
My white neck ;
Let me pull
Your soft wool ;
Let me kiss
Your soft face ;
Merrily, merrily we welcome in the year.
William Blake

THE DANCE OF THE FLOWERS

Thou perceivest the Flowers put forth their precious
Odours,
And none can tell how from so small a center comes
such sweet,
Forgetting that within that Center Eternity expands
Its ever-during doors, that Og and Anak fiercely
guard.
First, ere the morning breaks, joy opens in the
flowery bosoms,
Joy even to tears, which the Sun rising dries ;
first the Wild Thyme
And Meadow-sweet, downy and soft, waving among
the reeds,
Light springing in the air, lead the sweet Dance ;
they wake
The Honeysuckle sleeping on the Oak, the flaunting
beauty
Revels along upon the wind ; the White-thorn
lovely May
Opens her many lovely eyes ; listening, the Rose
still sleeps.

None dare to wake her. Soon she bursts her
crimson-curtained bed
And comes forth in the majesty of beauty ; every
Flower—
The Pink, the Jessamine, the Wallflower, the Car-
nation,
The Jonquil, the mild Lily opes her heavens ;
every Tree
And Flower and Herb soon fill the air with an
innumerable Dance,
Yet all in order sweet and lovely. . . .

William Blake

THE LARK'S ASCENT

THOU hearest the Nightingale begin the song of
Spring ;
The lark sitting upon his earthy bed, just as the morn
Appears, listens silent, then springing from the
waving Corn-field, loud
He leads the Choir of Day—trill, trill, trill, trill,
Mounting upon the wing of light into the Great
Expanse,
Re-echoing against the lovely blue and shining
heavenly Shell,
His little throat labours with inspiration ; every
feather
On throat and breast and wings vibrates with the
effluence Divine.
All Nature listens silent to him, and the awful Sun
Stands still upon the Mountain looking on this
little Bird
With eyes of soft humidity and wonder, love, and awe

William Blake

THE LITTLE BLACK BOY

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but O my soul is white ;
White as an angel is the English child,
But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,
And, sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissèd me,
* And, pointing to the east, began to say :

“ Look on the rising sun,—there God does live,
And gives His light, and gives His heat away ;
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive
Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

“ And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love ;
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

“ For when our souls have learned the heat to bear,
The cloud will vanish, we shall hear His voice,
Saying : ‘ Come out from the grove, My love and care,
And round My golden tent like lambs rejoice.’ ”

Thus did my mother say, and kissèd me ;
And thus I say to little English boy :
When I from black, and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear
To lean in joy upon our father's knee ;
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him, and he will then love me.

William Blake

ON ANOTHER'S SORROW

CAN I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too ?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief ?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share ?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow filled ?

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan an infant fear ?
No, no ! never can it be !
Never, never can it be !

And can He who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small,
Hear the small bird's grief and care,
Hear the woes that infants bear—

And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring pity in their breast,
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant's tear ?

And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away ?
O no ! never can it be !
Never, never can it be !

He doth give His joy to all :
He becomes an Infant small,
He becomes a Man of Woe,
He doth feel the sorrow too.

WILLIAM BLAKE

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy Maker is not by :
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy Maker is not near.

O ! He gives to us His joy,
That our grief He may destroy.
Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

William Blake

AH, SUNFLOWER !

Ah, sunflower, weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the sun,
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the travellers' journey is done—

Where the youth pined away with desires
And the pale virgins shrouded in snow,
Arise from their graves, and aspire
Where my Sunflower wishes to go.

William Blake

THE TIGER

TIGER, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry ?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes ?
On what wings dare he aspire ?
What the hand dare seize the fire ?

And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart ?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand ? and what dread feet ?

What the hammer ? what the chain ?
In what furnace was thy brain ?
What the anvil ? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp ?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see ?
Did He who made the lamb make thee ?

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry ?

William Blake

NIGHT

THE sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine,
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine.

The moon, like a flower
In heaven's high bower,
With silent delight,
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy grove,
Where flocks have ta'en delight ;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent move
The feet of angels bright ;

WILLIAM BLAKE

Unseen, they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are covered warm ;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm :
 If they see any weeping
 That should have been sleeping,
They pour sleep on their head,
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,
They pitying stand and weep ;
Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
 But if they rush dreadful,
 The angels, most heedful,
 Receive each mild spirit,
 New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes
Shall flow with tears of gold :
And pitying the tender cries,
And walking round the fold :
 Saying : " Wrath by His meekness,
 And by His health, sickness
 Are driven away
 From our immortal day.

" And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
I can lie down and sleep,
Or think on Him who bore thy name,
Graze after thee, and weep.

For wash'd in life's river,
My bright mane for ever
Shall shine like the gold,
As I guard o'er the fold."

William Blake

AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

*To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower ;
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.*

A Robin Redbreast in a cage
Puts all heaven in a rage ;
A dove-house filled with doves and pigeons
Shudders hell through all its regions.
A dog starved at his master's gate
Predicts the ruin of the State ;
A game-cock clipped and armed for fight
Doth the rising sun affright ;
A horse misused upon the road
Calls to Heaven for human blood.
Every wolf's and lion's howl
Raises from hell a human soul ;
Each outcry of the hunted hare
A fibre from the brain doth tear ;
A skylark wounded on the wing
Doth make a cherub cease to sing.
He who shall hurt the little wren
Shall never be beloved by men ;
He who the ox to wrath has moved
Shall never be by woman loved ;
He who shall train the horse to war
Shall never pass the Polar Bar.

William Blake

THE LAND OF DREAMS

"AWAKE, awake, my little boy !
Thou wast thy mother's only joy ;
Why dost thou weep in thy gentle sleep ?
O wake ! thy father doth thee keep."

"O what land is the land of dreams ?
What are its mountains and what are its streams ?
O father ! I saw my mother there,
Among the lilies by waters fair,

"Among the lambs clothéd in white,
She walked with her Thomas in sweet delight.
I wept for joy, like a dove I mourn—
O when shall I again return ? "

"Dear Child ! I also by pleasant streams
Have wandered all night in the land of dreams ;
But, though calm and warm the waters wide
I could not get to the other side."

"Father, O father ! what do we here,
In this land of unbelief and fear ?
The land of dreams is better far,
Above the light of the morning star."

William Blake

THE TWO SONGS

I HEARD an Angel singing
When the day was springing :
"Mercy, Pity and Peace
Are the world's release."

So he sang all day
Over the new-mown hay,
Till the sun went down,
And haycocks looked brown.

I heard a Devil curse
Over the heath and the furze :
“ Mercy could be no more
If there were nobody poor,
And Pity no more could be
If all were happy as ye :
And mutual fear brings Peace.
Misery's increase
Are Mercy, Pity, Peace.”

At his curse the sun went down,
And the heav'ns gave a frown.

William Blake

LONDON

I WANDER through each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every man,
In every infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear :

How the chimney-sweeper's cry
Every blackening church appals,
And the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace walls.

But most, through midnight streets I hear
How the youthful harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.
William Blake

CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE

I WAS angry with my friend :
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe :
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears
Night and morning with my tears,
And I sunnèd it with smiles
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night
Till it bore an apple bright,
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole
When the night had veil'd the pole ;
In the morning, glad, I see
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.

William Blake

THE NEW JERUSALEM

AND did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountain green ?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pasture seen ?

And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills ?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic mills ?

Bring me my bow of burning gold !
Bring me my arrows of desire !
Bring me my spear : O clouds, unfold !
Bring me my chariot of fire !

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

William Blake

TO THE CHRISTIANS

ENGLAND, awake ! awake ! awake !
Jerusalem thy sister calls !
Why wilt thou sleep the sleep of death,
And close her from thy ancient walls ?

Thy hills and valleys felt her feet
Gently upon their bosoms move :
Thy gates beheld sweet Zion's ways ;
Then was a time of joy and love.

And now the time returns again :
Our souls exult ; and London's towers
Receive the Lamb of God to dwell
In England's green and pleasant bowers.

William Blake

EVENING MYSTERY

Now ragged clouds in the west are heaping,
All the hedges fall a-weeping,
And in a thin green distance flowers
The moon, the blossom of lonely hours.

The moon she lightens on a myriad meadows
And her rays wander among wood shadows ;
Ere the last of sunset's flown
She has made a new world of her own.

Old farm-houses with their white faces
Fly, and their ghosts have taken their places ;
Even the signposts like grim liars
Point to losing brakes and briars.

Tired birds roosting are not yet sleeping,
But stir and mutter at the wild eyes peeping ;
And sheep will not let silence lie,
But blare about the hilltop sky

As though long-plotting dogs had broken
From kennel-chains, by the ringleader spoken,
To harry the ewes in the light of the moon--
The blood on their jaws will hang 'em anon.

But no, for miles the sheepfolds moan,
And dogs bay from their farms alone ;
Can she who shines so calm be fear ?
What poison pours she in slumber's ear ?

Edmund Blunden

A SWEET LULLABY

Come, little babe, come, silly soul,
Thy father's shame, thy mother's grief,
Born as I doubt to all our dole,

And to thyself unhappy chief :

Sing lullaby and lap it warm,

Poor soul that thinks no creature harm.

Thou little think'st, and less dost know

The cause of this thy mother's moan.

Thou want'st the wit to wail her woe,

And I myself am all alone.

Why dost thou weep ? why dost thou wail ?

And know'st not yet what thou dost ail.

Come, little wretch ! Ah ! silly heart,

Mine only joy, what can I more ?

If there be any wrong thy smart,

That may the destinies implore,

'Twas I, I say, against my will—

I wail the time, but be thou still.

And dost thou smile ? O thy sweet face !

Would God Himself He might thee see !

No doubt thou soon would'st purchase grace,

I know right well, for thee and me.

But come to mother, babe, and play,

For father false is fled away.

Sweet boy, if it by fortune chance

Thy father home again to send,

If Death do strike me with his lance,

Yet may'st thou me to him commend :

If any ask thy mother's name,

Tell how by love she purchased blame.

Then will his gentle heart soon yield :

I know him of a noble mind :

Although a lion in the field,

A lamb in town thou shalt him find :
Ask blessing, babe, be not afraid !
His sugared words have me betrayed.

Then may'st thou joy and be right glad,
Although in woe I seem to moan ;
Thy father is no rascal lad,
A noble youth of blood and bone ;
His glancing looks, if he once smile,
Right honest women may beguile.

Come, little boy, and rock a-sleep !
Sing lullaby, and be thou still !
I, that can do naught else but weep,
Will sit by thee and wail my fill :
God bless my babe, and lullaby
From this thy father's quality.

Nicholas Breton

A LATE SPRING EVENING

I SAW the Virgin-Mother clad in green,
Walking the sprinkled meadows at sundown ;
While yet the moon's cold flame was hung between
The day and night above the dusky town :
I saw her brighter than the western gold,
Whereto she faced in splendour to behold.

Her dress was greener than the tenderest leaf
That trembled in the sunset glare aglow :
Herself more delicate than is the brief,
Pink apple-blossom that May showers lay low,
And more delicious than's the earliest streak,
The blushing rose shows of her crimson cheek.

As if to match the sight that so did please,
A music entered, making passion fain ;
Three nightingales sat singing in the trees,
And praised the Goddess of the fallen rain ;
Which yet their unseen motions did arouse,
Or parting Zephyrs shook from out the boughs.

And o'er the tree-tops, scattered in mid-air,
The exhausted clouds, laden with crimson light,
Floated, or seemed to sleep ; and highest there,
One planet broke the lingering ranks of night ;
Daring day's company, so he might spy
The Virgin queen once with his watchful eye.

And when I saw her, then I worshipped her,
And said, O bounteous Spring, O beauteous
Spring,
Mother of all my years, thou who dost stir
My heart to adore thee and my tongue to sing,
Flower of my fruit, of my heart's blood the fire,
Of all my satisfaction the desire !

How art thou every year more beautiful,
Younger for all the winters thou has cast !
And I, for all my love grows, grow more dull,
Decaying with each season over-past !
In vain to teach him love must man employ thee :
The more he learns the less he can enjoy thee.

Robert Bridges

LONDON SNOW

WHEN men were all asleep the snow came flying,
In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,
Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town ;

Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing ;
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down :

Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing ;
Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.

All night it fell, and when full inches seven
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
Its clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven ;
And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed
brightness

Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly
glare :

The eye marvelled—marvelled at the dazzling
whiteness ;

The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn
air ;

No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.

Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling,
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snow-
balling ;

Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees ;
Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,
“ O look at the trees ! ” they cried, “ O look at the
trees ! ”

With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder,
Following along the white deserted way,
A country company long dispersed asunder :

When now already the sun, in pale display
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.

For now doors open, and war is waged with the
snow ;

And trains of sombre men, past tale of number,
Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they
go :

But even for them awhile no cares encumber
Their minds diverted ; the daily word unspoken,
The daily thoughts of labour and sorrow slumber
At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for
the charm they have broken.

Robert Bridges

NIGHTINGALES

BEAUTIFUL must be the mountains whence ye come,
And bright in the fruitful valleys the streams, where-
from

Ye learn your song :

Where are those starry woods ? O might I wander
there,

Among the flowers, which in that heavenly air
Bloom the year long !

Nay, barren are those mountains and spent the
streams :

Our song is the voice of desire, that haunts our
dreams,

A throe of the heart,

Whose pining visions dim, forbidden hopes pro-
found,

No dying cadence nor long sigh can sound,
For all our art.

Alone, aloud in the raptured ear of men
We pour our dark nocturnal secret ; and then,
As night is withdrawn

From these sweet-springing meads and bursting
 boughs of May,
Dream, while the innumerable choir of day
 Welcome the dawn.

Robert Bridges

THE PRISONER

STILL let my tyrants know, I am not doom'd to wear
Year after year in gloom and desolate despair ;
A messenger of Hope comes every night to me,
And offers for short life, eternal liberty.

He comes with Western winds, with evening's
 wandering airs,
With that clear dusk of heaven that brings the
 thickest stars :
Winds like a pensive tone, and stars a tender fire,
And visions rise, and change, that kill me with
 desire.

Desire for nothing known in my maturer years,
When Joy grew mad with awe, at coming future
 tears :
When, if my spirit's sky was full of flashes warm,
I knew not whence they came, from sun or thunder-
 storm.

But first, a hush of peace—a soundless calm descends ;
The struggle of distress and fierce impatience ends.
Mute music soothes my breast—unutter'd harmony
That I could never dream, till Earth was lost to me.

Then dawns the Invisible ; the Unseen its truth
 reveals ;
My outward sense is gone, my inward essence feels ;

Its wings are almost free—its home, its harbour
found,

Measuring the gulf, it stoops, and dares the final
bound.

O dreadful is the check—intense the agony—
When the ear begins to hear, and the eye begins
to see ;

When the pulse begins to throb—the brain to think
again—

The soul to feel the flesh, and the flesh to feel the
chain.

Yet I would lose no sting, would wish no torture less ;
The more that anguish racks, the earlier it will
bless ;

And robed in fires of hell, or bright with heavenly
shine,

If it but herald Death, the vision is divine.

Emily Brontë

LAST LINES

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere :

I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity !
Life—that in me has rest,
As I—undying Life—have power in Thee !

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts : unutterably vain ;
Worthless as wither'd weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thine infinity ;
So surely anchor'd on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
The Spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes cease to be,
And Thou wert left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void ;
Thou—Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

Emily Brontë

PEACE

Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with
His hour,
And caught our youth, and wakened us from
sleeping,
With hand made sure, clear eye, and sharpened
power,
To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping,
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary,
Leave the sick hearts that honour could not
move,
And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
And all the little emptiness of Love !

Oh ! we, who have known shame, we have found
 release there,
 Where there's no ill, no grief, but sleep has
 mending,
 Naught broken save this body, lost but breath ;
 Nothing to shake the laughing heart's long peace
 there
 But only agony, and that has ending ;
 And the worst friend and enemy is but Death.
Rupert Brooke

THE DEAD

BLOW out, you bugles, over the rich Dead !
 There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
 But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
 These laid the world away ; poured out the red
 Sweet wine of youth ; gave up the years to be
 Of work and joy, and that unhopèd serene,
 That men call age ; and those who would have
 been,
 Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow ! They brought us, for our
 dearth,
 Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
 Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
 And paid his subjects with a royal wage ;
 And Nobleness walks in our ways again ;
 And we have come into our heritage.
Rupert Brooke

THE SOLDIER

IF I should die, think only this of me :

That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England
given ;
Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her day ;
And laughter, learnt of friends ; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke

THE PITCHER

OFTEN at a wayside fountain
You may see a pitcher stand,
Stooped beneath the mossy channel,
Purple slate on either hand.

And the streamlet, never heeding
If the pitcher's brimming o'er,
With an innocent persistence
Lavishes its silver store.

And the crystal-beaded bubbles
Burst upon its lazy lip ;
But the well-contented pitcher
Does not even care to sip ;

Does not even know that o'er him
There is flowing from the hill
What would fill a thousand pitchers,
And a thousand pitchers still.

Wasted on his gurgling fulness
All its fretting soft and faint,
Wasted all its pretty urging,
All the music of its plaint !

But the streamlet, ever patient,
Ceaseless laves his churlish sides ;
For the streamlet has the patience
That in Nature's heart abides.

Even so at God's sweet fountain
Some one left me long ago ;
Left my shallow soul expectant
Of the everlasting flow.

And it came, and poured upon me,
Rose and mantled to the brim ;
And I knew that God was filling
One more soul to carry Him.

So he filled me—then I lost Him,
Lost Him in His own excess ;
For He could not but transcend me
In my very nothingness.

Wretched soul that couldst not hold Him !
Soul incapable and base !
Hardly 'ware that He doth bathe thee
Steeped in largess of His grace !

Puny soul, that couldst not take Him !
Torpid soul—that feel'st no need !
Perish from before the Godhead,
Let a larger soul succeed !

"Not so!" saith the God of goodness;

"I have many souls to fill;
From this soul a while desisting,
I will tarry in the hill.

"Then, when it is dry and dusty,
I will seek the thirsty plain;
I will wet the mossy channel,
And the purple slate again."

T. E. Brown

MY GARDEN

A GARDEN is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot—
The veriest school
Of peace; and yet the fool
Contentends that God is not—
Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

T. E. Brown

FROM "THE RHYME OF THE DUCHESS MAY"

Oh, the little birds sang east, and the little birds
sang west—

Toll slowly.

And I said in underbreath,—All our life is mixed
with death,

And who knoweth what is best?

Oh, the little birds sang east, and the little birds
sang west—

Toll slowly.

And I smiled to think God's greatness flowed around
our incompleteness—

Round our restlessness, His rest.

Elizabeth B. Browning

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

WHAT was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river;
And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed
Till there was not a sign of the leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river!)
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,

Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing,
In holes, as he sat by the river.

"This is the way," laughed the great god Pan
(Laughed while he sat by the river),
"The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed."
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan !
Piercing sweet by the river !
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan !
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of man :
The true gods sigh for the cost and the pain,—
For the reed that grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

Elizabeth B. Browning

A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING
IN EUROPE

LET us begin and carry up this corpse,
Singing together.
Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes,
Each in its tether

Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,
 Cared-for till cock-crow :
Look out if yonder be not day again
 Rimming the rock-row !
That's the appropriate country ; there, man's
 thought,
 Rarer, intenser,
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
 Chafes in the censer.
Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and
 crop ;
 Seek we sepulture
On a tall mountain, citied to the top,
 Crowded with culture !
All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels ;
 Clouds overcome it ;
No, yonder sparkle is the citadel's
 Circling its summit.
Thither our path lies ; wind we up the heights :
 Wait ye the warning ?
• Our low life was the level's and the night's ;
 He's for the morning.
Step to a tune, square chests, erect each
 head,
 'Ware the beholders !
This is our master, famous, calm, and dead,
 Borne on our shoulders.
Sleep, crop and herd ! sleep, darkling thorpe and
 croft.
(Here's the town-gate reached, there's the market-
 place
 Gaping before us)
Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace
 (Hearten our chorus)

That before living he'd learn how to live—
 No end to learning.
Earn the means first—God surely will contrive
 Use for our earning.
Others mistrust and say—"But time escapes,—
 Live now or never!"
He said, "What's Time? leave Now for dogs and
 apes!
 Man has Forever."
Back to his book then: deeper drooped his
 head
 Calculus racked him:
Lead before, his eyes grew dross of lead;
 Tussis attacked him.
"Now, Master, take a little rest!"—not he!
 (Caution redoubled!
Step two a-breast, the way winds narrowly.)
 Not a whit troubled,
Back to his studies, fresher than at first,
 Fierce as a dragon
He (soul-hydroptic with a sacred thirst)
 Sucked at the flagon.
Oh, if we draw a circle premature,
 Heedless of far gain,
Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure,
 Bad is our bargain!
Was it not great? did not he throw on God,
 (He loves the burthen)—
God's task to make the heavenly period
 Perfect the earthen?
Did not he magnify the mind, show clear
 Just what it all meant?
He would not discount life, as fools do here,
 Paid by instalment!

He ventured neck or nothing—heaven's success
Found, or earth's failure :
“ Wilt thou trust death or not ? ” he answered
“ Yes.
Hence with life's pale lure ! ”
That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it :
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it.
That low man goes on adding one to one,
His hundred's soon hit :
This high man, aiming at a million,
Misses an unit.
That, has the world here—should he need the next,
Let the world mind him !
This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed
Seeking shall find Him.
So, with the throttling hands of Death at strife,
Ground he at grammar ;
Still, thro' the rattle, parts of speech were rife,
While he could stammer
He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be !—
Properly based *Oun*—
Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,
Dead from the waist down.
Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place.
Hail to your purlieus,
All ye highfliers of the feathered race,
Swallows and curlews !
Here's the top-peak ; the multitude below
Live, for they can, there :
This man decided not to Live but Know—
Bury this man there ?

Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds
form,
Lightnings are loosened,
Stars come and go ! Let joy break with the storm,
Peace let the dew send !
Lofty designs must close in like effects :
Loftily lying,
Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,
Living and dying.

Robert Browning

MEMORABILIA

AN, did you once see Shelley plain,
And did he stop and speak to you ?
And did you speak to him again ?
How strange it seems, and new !

But you were living before that,
And also you are living after,
And the memory I started at—
My starting moves your laughter !

I crossed a moor with a name of its own
And a certain use in the world no doubt,
Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone
'Mid the blank miles round about—

For there I picked up on the heather
And there I put inside my breast
A moulted feather, an eagle-feather—
Well, I forget the rest.

Robert Browning

EVELYN HOPE

I

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead !

Sit and watch by her side an hour.

That is her bookshelf, this her bed ;

She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die, too, in the glass.

Little has yet been changed, I think—

The shutters are shut, no light may pass

Save two long rays thro' the hinge's chink.

II

Sixteen years old when she died !

Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name—

It was not her time to love : beside,

Her life had many a hope and aim,

Duties enough and little cares,

And now was quiet, now astir—

Till God's hand beckoned unawares,

And the sweet white brow is all of her.

III

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope ?

What, your soul was pure and true,

The good stars met in your horoscope,

Made you of spirit, fire and dew—

And just because I was thrice as old,

And our paths in the world diverged so wide,

Each was nought to each, must I be told ?

We were fellow mortals, nought beside ?

IV

No, indeed ! for God above

Is great to grant, as mighty to make,

And creates the love to reward the love,—

I claim you still, for my own love's sake !

Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few—
Much is to learn and much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

V

But the time will come,—at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant, I shall say,
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay ?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red—
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

VI

I have lived, I shall say, so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes ;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me—
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope !
What is the issue ? let us see !

VII

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while ;
My heart seemed full as it could hold—
There was place and to spare for the frank young
smile
And the red young mouth and the hair's young gold.
So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep—
See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand.
There, that is our secret ! go to sleep ;
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

Robert Browning

THE PATRIOT

(An Old Story)

It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad.
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day!

The air broke into a mist with bells,
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise repels—
But give me your sun from yonder skies!"
They had answered, "And afterward, what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun,
To give it my loving friends to keep.
Nought man could do, have I left undone;
And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
Just a palsied few at the windows set—
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind,
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.

"Paid by the World,—what dost thou owe
Me?" God might question: now instead
'Tis God shall repay! I am safer so.

Robert Browning

THE LOST LEADER

I

JUST for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote;
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs who so little allowed:
How all our copper had gone for his service!
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been
proud!
We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured
him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
Burns, Shelley were with us,—they watch from
their graves!
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!

II

We shall march prospering,—not thro' his presence;
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire:

Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for angels,
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God !
Life's night begins : let him never come back to us !
There would be doubt, hesitation, and pain,
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again !
Best fight on well, for we taught him,—strike
gallantly,
Menace our heart ere we master his own ;
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait
us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne !

Robert Browning

IT'S WISER BEING GOOD THAN BAD

It's wiser being good than bad ;
It's safer being meek than fierce :
It's fitter being sane than mad.
My own hope is, a sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched
That, after Last, returns the First,
Though a wide compass round be fetched ;
That what began best, can't end worst,
Nor what God blessed once, prove accurst.

Robert Browning

HOME THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,

That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now !

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows !
Hark, where my blossom'd pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush ; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture !

And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon flower !

Robert Browning

HOME THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-
West died away ;

Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into
Cadiz Bay ;

Bluish mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar
lay ;

In the dimmest North-East distance, dawned
Gibraltar grand and grey ;

“ Here and here did England help me : how can
I help England ? ”—say,

Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to
praise and pray,

While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

Robert Browning

THE YEAR'S AT THE SPRING

THE year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn ;
Morning's at seven ;
The hill-side's dew-pearled ;
The lark's on the wing ;
The snail's on the thorn ;
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world !

Robert Browning

PROSPICE

FEAR death ?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe ;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go :
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last !
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and
forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No ! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul ! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest !

Robert Browning

EPILOGUE

TO ASOLANDO

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where—by death, fools think,
imprison'd—
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved
so,

—Pity me ?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken !
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly ?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivel
—Being—who ?

One who never turned his back but march'd breast
forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dream'd, though right were worsted, wrong
would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer !
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should
be,
" Strive and thrive ! " cry, " Speed,—fight on,
fare ever

There as here ! "

Robert Browning

THE SONG OF THE SHEPHERD BOY IN THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION

He that is down need fear no fall,
He that is low, no pride ;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,
Little be it or much :
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,
Because Thou gavest such.

Fullness to such a burden is
That go on pilgrimage ;
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age.

John Bunyan

A RED, RED ROSE

O, my luve's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June !
O, my luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune !

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
 So deep in luvè am I,
 And I will luvè thee still, my dear,
 Till a' the seas gang dry :

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
 And the rocks melt wi' the sun !
 I will luvè thee still, my dear,
 While the sands o' life shall run.
 And fare thee weel, my only luvè,
 And fare thee weel awhile !
 And I will come again, my luvè,
 Tho' it were ten thousand mile :

Robert Burns

I LOVE MY JEAN

OF a' the airts¹ the wind can blaw
 I dearly like the West,
 For there the bonnie lassie lives,
 The lassie I lo'e best :
 There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
 And mony a hill between ;
 But day and night my fancy's flight
 Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
 I see her sweet and fair :
 I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
 I hear her charm the air :
 There's not a bonnie flower that springs
 By fountain, shaw, or green,
 There's not a bonnie bird that si g^a
 But minds me o' my Jean.

¹ Directions.

O blaw ye westlin winds, blaw saft
 Among the leafy trees ;
 Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
 Bring hame the laden bees ;
 And bring the lassie back to me
 That's aye sae neat and clean ;
 The smile o' her wad banish care,
 Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows among the knowes
 Hae pass'd atween us twa !
 How fond to meet, how wae to part
 That night she gaed awa !
 The Powers aboon can only ken
 To whom the heart is seen,
 That nane can be sae dear to me
 As my sweet lovely Jean !

Robert Burns

HIGHLAND MARY

Ye banks and braes and streams around
 The castle o' Montgomery,
 Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
 Your waters never drumlie !
 When summer first unfauld her robes,
 To them the longest tarry ;
 When I took the last farewell
 My sweet Highland Mary.
 Sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
 Rich the hawthorn's blossom,
 Earnest their fragrant shade
 Gave to my bosom

ROBERT BURNS

The golden hours on angel wings
 Flew o'er me and my dearie ;
 For dear to me as light and life
 Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and lock'd embrace
 Our parting was fu' tender ;
 And pledging aft to meet again,
 We tore oursels asunder ;
 But, Oh ! fell Death's untimely frost,
 That nipt my flower sae early !
 Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
 That wraps my Highland Mary !

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
 I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly !
 And clos'd my auld sae kindly
 That dwelt for aye the sparkling glance
 And mou'delt on me sae kindly
 That I'm biding now in silent dust
 But still heart that lo'ed me dearly
 Shall th within my bosom's core
 Live my Highland Mary.

Robt

Go, fet ev
 An' fill, lch to me a pint o'
 That I m see it in a silver tassel
 A servie ar ay drink before I !
 The boat her to my bonnie lass
 Fu' loue's rocks at the port o'
 The ship y fl the wind blows
 And I ire's toes by the steeple
 But leave my bon

MY BONNIE MARY

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are ranked ready,
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
The battle closes thick and bloody.
But it's no the roar o' sea or shore
Wad mak me langer wish to tarry,
Nor shout o' war that's heard afar—
It's leaving thee, my bonny Mary!

Robert Burns

BONNIE LESLEY

O SAW ye bonnie Lesley,
As she gaed o'er the border?
She's gane like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.
To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever;
For Nature made her what she is,
And ne'er made sic anither!
Thou art a queen, Fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we, before thee;
Thou art divine, Fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.
The Deil he could na scaith¹ thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say "I canna wrang thee!"
The Powers aboon will tent² thee;
Misfortune sha' na steer³ thee;
Thou'rt like themselves sae lovely
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

¹ Hurt.

² Take care of.

³ Molest.

ROBERT BURNS

Return again, Fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie !
That we may brag we hae a lass
There's nane again sea bonnie.

Robert Burns

Æ FOND KISS

Æ fond kiss, and then we sever ;
Æ fareweel, alas, for ever !
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee !
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him
While the star of hope she leaves him ?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.
I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy ;
Naething could resist my Nancy ;
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.
Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest !
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest !
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love and pleasure !
Æ fond kiss, and then we sever !
Æ fareweel, alas, for ever !
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee !

Robert Burns

THE BANKS O' DOON

YE banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair ;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary fu' o' care ?
Thou'll break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons thro' the flowering thorn :
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed, never to return.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' his love,
And fondly sae did I o' mine !
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree ;
And my fause lover staw¹ my rose,
But, ah ! he left the thorn wi' me.

Robert Burns

TO A MOUSE

WEE, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
O what a panic's in thy breastie !
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle !²
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
Wi' murd'ring pattle !³

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle

Stole.

² Hurry.

³ Stick for clearing the plough.

At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal !

I doubt na, whiles,¹ but thou may thieve ;
What then ? poor beastie, thou maun live !
A daimen-icker² in a thrave³

'S a sma' request :
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,⁴
And never miss't !

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin !
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin' :
And naething, now, to big⁵ a new ane,
O' foggage green !
An' bleak December's winds ensuin'
Baith snell⁶ an' keen !

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till, crash ! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves and stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble !
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But⁷ house or hald,
To thole⁸ the winter's sleety dribble
An' cranreuch⁹ could !

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane
In proving foresight may be vain :

¹ Now and then.

² Ear of corn.

³ Twenty-four sheaves.

⁴ Rest.

⁵ Build.

⁶ Bitter.

⁷ Without.

⁸ Endure.

⁹ Hoar frost.

The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,¹
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me !
The present only toucheth thee :
But, Och ! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear !
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear !

Robert Burns

JOHN ANDERSON

JOHN ANDERSON my jo,² John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent ; ³
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snow ;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And mony a canty ⁴ day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither :
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo.

Robert Burns

¹ Awry.

² Darling.

³ Smooth.

⁴ Merry.

FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT
Is there, for honest poverty
That hangs his head, and a' that ?
The coward-slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that !
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-grey, and a' that ;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that,
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that ;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king of men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie,¹ ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that ;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof² for a' that :
For a' that, and a' that,
His riband, star, and a' that,
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak' a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that ;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith he mauna fa' that !

¹ Little fellow.

² Ninny.

For a' that, and a' that,
 Their dignities, and a' that,
 The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
 Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
 As come it will for a' that,
 That sense and worth o'er a' the earth
 May bear the gree,¹ and a' that.

For a' that, and a' that,
 It's coming yet for a' that,
 That man to man, the world o'er,
 Shall brothers be for a' that.

Robert Burns

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID OR THE RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS

My Son, these maxims make a rule,
 An' lump them ay thegither ;
 The *Rigid Righteous* is a fool,
 The *Rigid Wise* anither :
 The cleanest corn that e'er was dight²
 May hae some pyles o' caff³ in ;
 So ne'er a fellow-creature slight
 For random fits o' daffin.⁴

SOLOMON—*Eccles.* vii. 16.

O YE wha are sac guid yoursel,
 Sae pious and sae holy,
 Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
 Your neibours' fauts and folly !
 Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,
 Supplied wi' store o' water ;
 The heapèt happer's⁵ ebbing still,
 An' still the clap plays clatter.

¹ Victory.

² Winnowed.

³ Grains of chaff.

⁴ Merriment.

⁵ Heaped hopper.

Hear me, ye venerable core,
As counsel for poor mortals
That frequent pass douce ¹ Wisdom's door
For glakit ² Folly's portals :
I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes,
Would here propone defences—
Their donsie ³ tricks, their black mistakes,
Their failings and mischances.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compared,
And shudder at the niffer ; ⁴
But cast a moment's fair regard,
What maks the mighty differ ?
Discount what scant occasion gave,
That purity ye pride in ;
And (what's aft mair than a' the lave)
Your better art o' hidin.

Think, when your castigated pulse
Gies now and then a wallop !
What ragings must his veins convulse
That still eternal gallop !
Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail
Right on ye scud your sea-way ;
But in the teeth o' baith to sail,
It maks an unco lee-way.

See Social Life and Glee sit down,
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmugrify'd, they're grown
Debauchery and Drinking :
O would they stay to calculate
Th' eternal consequences ;
Or your more dreaded hell to state,
Damnation of expenses !

¹ Sober.² Foolish.³ Neat.⁴ Exchange.

Ye high, exalted, virtuous dames,
Tied up in godly laces,
Before ye gie poor Frailty names,
Suppose a change of cases ;
A dear-lov'd lad, convenience snug,
A treach'rous inclination ;
But, let me whisper i' your lug,¹
Ye're aiblins² nae temptation.

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman ;
Tho' they may gang a kennin³ wrang,
To step aside is human :
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving *Why* they do it ;
And just as lamely can ye mark
How far perhaps they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us ;
He knows each chord, its various tone,
Each spring, its various bias :
Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it ;
What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted.

Robert Burns

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

WEE, modest, crimson-tippèd flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour ;

¹ Ear.

² Perhaps.

³ Little.

For I maun crush amang the stoure¹

Thy slender stem :

To spare thee now is past my power,

Thou bonnie gem.

Alas ! it's no thy neebor sweet,

The bonnie lark, companion meet !

Bending thee 'mang the dewy weat²

Wi' speckled breast,

When upward-springing, blithe, to greet

The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north

Upon thy early, humble birth ;

Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth

Amid the storm ;

Scarce reared above the parent-earth

Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,

High sheltering woods and wa's maun³ shield,

But thou, beneath the random bield

O' clod, or stane,

Adorns the histie⁴ stubble-field,

Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,

Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,

Thou lifts thy unassuming head

In humble guise ;

But now the share uptears thy bed,

And low thou lies !

Such is the fate of artless maid,

Sweet floweret of the rural shade !

¹ Dust.

² Wet.

³ Walls must.

⁴ Bare.

By love's simplicity betrayed,
 And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soiled, is laid
 Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless-starred !
Unskilful he to note the card
 Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
 And overwhelm him o'er !

Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
 To misery's brink,
Till, wrenched of every stay but Heaven,
 He, ruined, sink !

Even thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date ;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
 Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight,
 Shall be thy doom.

Robert Burns

THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S
DAUGHTERS

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee ;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me :

When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep,
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep ;
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee,
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of summer's ocean.

Lord Byron

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies,
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes :
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half-impair'd the nameless grace,
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face ;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,

But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent !

Lord Byron

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it
takes away !

When the glow of early thought declines in feel-
ing's dull decay,

'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone,
which fades so fast,

But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth
itself be past.

Then the few, whose spirits float above the wreck
of happiness,

Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of
excess :

The magnet of their course is gone, or only points
in vain

The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never
stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death
itself comes down ;

It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream
its own ;

That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of
our tears,

And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where
the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth
distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their
former hope of rest ;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret
wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without but worn and
grey beneath.
O, could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have
been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a
vanish'd scene !
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish
though they be,
So midst the withered waste of life those tears
would flow to me.

Lord Byron

THE ISLES OF GREECE

THE isles of Greece, the isles of Greece !
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung !
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.
The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse ;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' " Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea ;
And, musing there an hour alone,
I dream'd that Greece might still be free ;
For, standing on the Persian's grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis ;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations—all were his !
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set, where were they ?

And where are they ? and where art thou,
My country ? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—
The heroic bosom beats no more !
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine ?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face ;
For what is left the poet here ?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

Must we but weep o'er days more blest ?
Must we but blush ? Our fathers bled.
Earth ! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead !
Of the three hundred grant but three
To make a new Thermopylæ !

What, silent still ? and silent all ?

Ah ! no ;—the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer :—" Let one living head,
But one, arise—we come, we come !"
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain ! Strike other chords,
Fill high the cup with Samian wine !
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine !
Hark ! rising to the ignoble call—
How answers each bold Bacchanal !

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet—
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone ?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one ?
You have the letters Cadmus gave—
Think ye he meant them for a slave ?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
We will not think of themes like these !
It made Anacreon's song divine :
He served—but served Polycrates—
A tyrant ; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend ;
That tyrant was Miltiades !
O ! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind !
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !

On Suli's rock and Parga's shore
Exists the remnant of a line

Such as the Doric mothers bore ;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—

They have a king who buys and sells !
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells ;
But Turkish force and Latin fraud
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !

Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
I see their glorious black eyes shine ;

But, gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,

Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep :

There, swan-like, let me sing and die.
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine !

Lord Byron

WE'LL GO NO MORE A-ROVING

So, we'll go no more a-roving

So late into the night,

Though the heart be still as loving

And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a-roving
By the light of the moon.

Lord Byron

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY SIXTH YEAR

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move :
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love !

My days are in the yellow leaf ;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone ;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone.

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle ;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not thus—and 'tis not here—

Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see !
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake ! (not Greece—she *is* awake !)
Awake, my spirit ! Think through whom
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home !

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood !—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regret'st thy youth, why live ?
The land of honourable death
Is here :—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath !

Seek out—less often sought than found—
A soldier's grave, for thee the best ;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.

Lord Byron

HOHENLINDEN

ON Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow ;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast array'd
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neigh'd
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven ;
Then rush'd the steed, to battle driven ;
And louder than the bolts of Heaven
Far flash'd the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow ;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn ; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave !
Wave, Munich ! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry !

Few, few shall part, where many meet !
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

Thomas Campbell

THE FAIRY QUEEN PROSERPINA

HARK, all you ladies that do sleep !

The fairy-queen Proserpina

Bids you awake and pity them that weep.

You may do in the dark

What the day doth forbid ;

Fear not the dogs that bark,

Night will have all hid.

But if you let your lovers moan,

The fairy-queen Proserpina

Will send abroad her fairies every one,

That shall pinch black and blue

Your white hands and fair arms

That did not kindly rue

Your paramours' harms.

In myrtle arbours on the downs

The fairy-queen Proserpina,

This night by moonshine leading merry rounds,

Holds a watch with sweet Love,

Down the dale, up the hill ;

No complaints or groans may move

Their holy vigil.

All you that will hold watch with Love,

The fairy-queen Proserpina

Will make you fairer than Dione's dove :

Roses red, lilies white,

And the clear damask hue

Shall on your cheeks alight :

Love will adorn you.

All you that love or loved before,

The fairy-queen Proserpina

Bids you increase that loving humour more :
They that have not fed
On delight amorous
She vows that they shall lead
Apes in Avernus.

Thomas Campion

CHERRY RIPE

THERE is a garden in her face
Where roses and white lilies grow ;
A heavenly paradise is that place
Wherein all pleasant fruits do flow.
There cherries grow which none may buy
Till " Cherry Ripe " themselves do cry.

Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of orient pearl a double row,
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rose-buds filled with snow ;
Yet them nor peer nor prince can buy,
Till " Cherry Ripe " themselves do cry.

Her eyes like angels watch them still,
Her brows like bended bows do stand,
Threatening with piercing frowns to kill
All that attempt with eye or hand
Those sacred cherries to come nigh,
Till " Cherry Ripe " themselves do cry.

Thomas Campion

THE MAN OF LIFE UPRIGHT

THE man of life upright,
Whose guiltless heart is free
From all dishonest deeds,
Or thought of vanity ;

The man whose silent days
In harmless joys are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude,
Nor sorrow discontent ;

That man needs neither towers
Nor armour for defence,
Nor secret vaults to fly
From thunder's violence :

He only can behold
With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deep
And terrors of the skies.

Thus, scorning all the cares
That fate or fortune brings,
He makes the heaven his book,
His wisdom heavenly things ;

Good thoughts his only friends,
His wealth a well-spent age,
The earth his sober inn
And quiet pilgrimage.

Thomas Campion

FOLLOW YOUR SAINT

FOLLOW your saint, follow with accents sweet !
Haste you, sad notes, fall at her flying feet !
There, wrapt in cloud of sorrow, pity move,
And tell the ravisher of my soul I perish for her
love :
But if she scorn my never-ceasing pain,
Then burst with sighing in her sight, and ne'er
return again.

All that I sang still to her praise did tend ;
Still she was first, still she my songs did end ;
Yet she my love and music both doth fly,
The music that her echo is and beauty's sym-
pathy :

Then let my notes pursue her scornful flight !
It shall suffice that they were breathed and died
for her delight.

Thomas Campion

WHEN THOU MUST HOME

WHEN thou must home to shades of underground,
And there arrived, a new admirèd guest,
The beauteous spirits do engirt thee round,
White Iope, blithe Helen, and the rest,
To hear the stories of thy finish'd love
From that smooth tongue whose music hell can
move ;

Then wilt thou speak of banqueting delights,
Of masques and revels which sweet youth did make,
Of tourneys and great challenges of knights,
And all these triumphs for thy beauty's sake :
When thou hast told these honours done to thee,
Then tell, O tell, how thou didst murder me !

Thomas Campion

NEVER WEATHER-BEATEN SAIL

NEVER weather-beaten sail more willing bent to
shore,
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more,

Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my
troubled breast—

O, come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul
to rest !

Ever blooming are the joys of heaven's high Paradise,
Cold age deafs not there our ears, nor vapour dims
our eyes :

Glory there the sun outshines ; whose beams the
Blessed only see—

O, come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my
sprite to Thee !

Thomas Campion

MEDIOCRITY IN LOVE REJECTED

GIVE me more love, or more disdain ;

The torrid, or the frozen zone

Bring equal ease unto my pain :

The temperate affords me none :

Either extreme, of love or hate,

Is sweeter than a calm estate.

Give me a storm ; if it be love,

Like Danae in that golden shower

I'll swim in pleasure ; if it prove

Disdain, that torrent will devour

My vulture-hopes ; and he's possessed

Of heaven, that's but from hell released ;

Then crown my joys, or cure my pain ;

Give me more love, or more disdain.

Thomas Carew

ALL UNDER THE WILLOW TREE

O SING unto my roundelay,
O drop the briny tear with me ;
Dance no more at holyday,
Like a running river be :
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Black his locks as the winter night,
White his robe as the summer snow,
Red his face as the morning light,
Cold he lies in the grave below :
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Sweet his tongue as the throstle's note,
Quick in dance as thought can be,
Deft his tabor, cudgel stout ;
O ! he lies by the willow-tree :
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Hark ! the raven flaps his wing
In the briered dell below ;
Hark ! the death-owl loud doth sing
To the night-mares as they go :
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

See ! the white moon shines on high ;
Whiter is my true love's shroud,
Whiter than the morning sky,
Whiter than the evening cloud :
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Here upon my true love's grave
Shall the barren flowers be laid,
Not one holy Saint to save
All the coldness of a maid :
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

With my hands I'll dent the briers
Round his holy corse to gree ;
Ouph and fairy, light your fires—
Here my body still shall be :
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Come, with acorn-cup and thorn,
Drain my hearté's blood away ;
Life and all its goods I scorn,
Dance by night, or feast by day :
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Thomas Chatterton

THE ROLLING ENGLISH ROAD

BEFORE the Roman came to Rye or out of Severn
strode,

The rolling English drunkard made the rolling
English road.

A reeling road, a rolling road, that rambles round
the shire,

And after him the parson ran, the sexton and the
squire ;

A merry road, a mazy road, and such as we did
tread,

The night we went to Birmingham by way of
Beachy Head.

I knew no harm of Bonaparte and plenty of the
Squire,

And for to fight the Frenchman I did not much
desire ;

But I did bash their bagginets because they came
arrayed

To straighten out the crooked road an English
drunkard made,

When you and I went down the lane with ale-mugs
in our hands,

The night we went to Glastonbury by way of
Goodwin Sands.

His sins they were forgiven him ; or why do flowers
run

Behind him ; and the hedges all strengthening in
the sun ?

The wild thing went from left to right and knew
not which was which,

But the wild rose was above him when they found
him in the ditch.

God pardon us, nor harden us : we did not see
so clear

The night we went to Bannockburn by way of
Brighton Pier.

My friends, we will not go again or ape an ancient
rage,

Or stretch the folly of our youth to be the shame
of age,

But walk with clearer eyes and ears this path that
wandereth,

And see undrugged in evening light the decent
inn of death ;

But there is good news yet to hear and fine things
to be seen,

Before we go to Paradise by way of Kensal Green.

G. K. Chesterton

O GOD OF EARTH AND ALTAR

O God of earth and altar,

Bow down and hear our cry,

Our earthly rulers falter,

Our people drift and die ;

The walls of gold entomb us,

The swords of scorn divide,

Take not thy thunder from us,

But take away our pride.

From all that terror teaches,

From lies of tongue and pen,

From all the easy speeches,

That comfort cruel men,

From sale and profanation

Of honour and the sword,

From sleep and from damnation,

Deliver us, good Lord !

Tie in a living tether
The prince and priest and thrall,
Bind all our lives together,
Smite us and save us all ;
In ire and exultation
Aflame with faith, and free,
Lift up a living nation,
A single sword to thee.

G. K. Chesterton

THE DONKEY

WHEN fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born ;

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will ;
Starve, scourge, deride me : I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools ! For I also had my hour ;
One far fierce hour and sweet :
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

G. K. Chesterton

THE THRUSH'S NEST

WITHIN a thick and spreading hawthorn bush,
That overhung a molehill large and round,
I heard from morn to morn a merry thrush
Sing hymns of rapture, while I drank the sound
With joy—and oft, an unintruding guest,
I watched her secret toils from day to day ;
How true she warped the moss to form her nest,
And modelled it within with wood and clay.
And by and by, like heath-bells gilt with dew,
There lay her shining eggs as bright as flowers,
Ink-spotted over, shells of green and blue :
And there I witnessed in the summer hours
A brood of nature's minstrels chirp and fly,
Glad as the sunshine and the laughing sky.

John Clare

TELL-TALE FLOWERS

AND has the Spring's all glorious eye
No lesson to the mind ?
The birds that cleave the golden sky—
Things to the earth resign'd—
Wild flowers that dance to every wind—
Do they no memory leave behind ?

Aye, flowers ! The very name of flowers,
That bloom in wood and glen,
Brings Spring to me in Winter's hours,
And childhood's dreams again.
The primrose on the woodland lea
Was more than gold and lands to me.

The violets by the woodland side
Are thick as they could thrive ;
I've talk'd to them with childish pride
As things that were alive :
I find them now in my distress—
They seem as sweet, yet valueless.

The cowslips on the meadow lea,
How have I run for them !
I look'd with wild and childish glee
Upon each golden gem :
And when they bow'd their heads so shy
I laugh'd, and thought they danced for joy.

And when a man in early years,
How sweet they used to come,
And give me tales of smiles and tears,
And thoughts more dear than home :
Secrets which words would then reprove—
They told the names of early love.

The primrose turn'd a babbling flower
Within its sweet recess :
I blush'd to see its secret bower,
And turn'd her name to bless.
The violets said the eyes were blue :
I loved, and did they tell me true ?

John Clare

THE DYING CHILD

HE could not die when trees were green,
For he loved the time too well.
His little hands, when flowers were seen,
Were held for the bluebell,
As he was carried o'er the green.

His eye glanced at the white-nosed bee ;
He knew those children of the Spring :
When he was well and on the lea
He held one in his hands to sing,
Which filled his heart with glee.

Infants, the children of the Spring !
How can an infant die
When butterflies are on the wing,
Green grass, and such a sky ?
How can they die at Spring ?

He held his hands for daisies white,
And then for violets blue,
And took them all to bed at night
That in the green fields grew,
As childhood's sweet delight.

And then he shut his little eyes,
And flowers would notice not ;
Birds' nests and eggs caused no surprise,
He now no blossoms got :
They met with plaintive sighs.

When Winter came and blasts did sigh,
And bare were plain and tree,
As he for ease in bed did lie
His soul seemed with the free,
He died so quietly.

John Clare

LASCIATE OGNI SPERANZA

I AM ! yet what I am who cares, or knows ?
My friends forsake me, like a memory lost.
I am the self-consumer of my woes,

They rise and vanish, an oblivious host,
Shadows of life, whose very soul is lost.
And yet I am—I live—though I am toss'd.

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dream,
Where there is neither sense of life, nor joys,
But the huge shipwreck of my own esteem
And all that's dear. Even those I loved the best
Are strange—nay, they are stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man has never trod—
For scenes where woman never smiled or wept—
There to abide with my Creator, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,
Full of high thoughts, unborn. So let me lie,
The grass below ; above, the vaulted sky.

John Clare

AUTUMN

I LOVE the fitful gust that shakes
The casement all the day,
And from the glossy elm-tree takes
The faded leaves away,
Twirling them by the window pane
With thousand others down the lane.

I love to see the shaking twig
Dance till the shut of eve,
The sparrow on the cottage rig,
Whose chirp would make believe
That Spring was just now flirting by
In Summer's lap with flowers to lie.

I love to see the cottage smoke
Curl upwards through the trees,
The pigeons nestled round the cote
On November days like these ;
The cock upon the dunghill crowing,
The mill sails on the heath a-going.
The feather from the raven's breast
Falls on the stubble lea,
The acorns near the old crow's nest
Drop pattering down the tree ;
The grunting pigs, that wait for all,
Scramble and hurry where they fall.

John Clare

WESTWARD THE LAND IS BRIGHT

SAY not, the struggle naught availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been, they remain.
If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars ;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.
For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.
And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

A. H. Clough

YOUTH AND AGE

VERSE, a breeze mid blossom straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine ! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young !

When I was young ?—Ah, woful *When* !
Ah, for the change 'twixt *Now* and *Then* !
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly *then* it flashed along :—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide !
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely ; Love is flower-like ;
Friendship is a sheltering tree ;
O ! the joys that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old !

Ere I was old ? Ah, woful *Ere*,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here !
O Youth ! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be that Thou art gone !
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd :—
And thou wert aye a masker bold !
What strange disguise hast now put on

To *make believe*, that thou art gone ?
 I see these locks in silvery slips
 This drooping gait, this altered size :
 But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,
 And tears take sunshine from thine eyes !
 Life is but thought : so think I will
 That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
 But the tears of mournful eve !
 Where no hope is, life's a warning
 That only serves to make us grieve,

When we are old :

That only serves to make us grieve
 With oft and tedious taking-leave,
 Like some poor nigh-related guest,
 That may not rudely be dismiss ;
 Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
 And tells the jest without the smile.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

LOVE

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
 All are but ministers of Love,
 And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
 Live o'er again that happy hour,
 When midway on the mount I lay,
 Beside the ruin'd tower.

The moonshine stealing o'er the scene
 Had blended with the lights of eve ;
 And she was there, my hope, my joy,
 My own dear Genevieve !

She leaned against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight ;
She stood and listen'd to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope ! my joy ! my Genevieve
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand ;
And that for ten long years he woo'd
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined : and ah !
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace ;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face !

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he cross'd the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and look'd him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright ;
And that he knew it was a Fiend.
This miserable Knight !

And that, unknowing what he did,
He leap'd amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land ;—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain ;—

And that she nursed him in a cave,
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay ;—

His dying words—but when I reach'd
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity !

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrill'd my guileless Genevieve ;
The music and the doleful tale,
 The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
 Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love and virgin shame ;
And, like the murmur of a dream,
 I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
 She fled to me and wept.

She half inclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace ;
And bending back her head, look'd up,
 And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art
That I might rather feel, than see,
 The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride ;
And so I won my Genevieve,
 My bright and beauteous Bride.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

KUBLA KHAN

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree :
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round :
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.
But O ! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !
A savage place ! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover !
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
scething,
As if this Earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced :
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean :
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war !

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
 Floated midway on the waves,
 Where was heard the mingled measure
 From the fountain and the caves.
 It was a miracle of rare device,
 A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice !
 A damsel with a dulcimer
 In a vision once I saw :
 It was an Abyssinian maid,
 And on her dulcimer she played,
 Singing of Mount Abora.
 Could I revive within me
 Her symphony and song,
 To such a deep delight 'twould win me
 That with music loud and long,
 I would build that dome in air,
 That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !
 And all who heard should see them there,
 And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !
 His flashing eyes, his floating hair !
 Weave a circle round him thrice,
 And close your eyes with holy dread,
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

THE EOLIAN HARP

(Composed at Clvedon, Somersetshire)

MY pensive Sara ! thy soft cheek reclined
 Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is
 To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown
 With white-flowered Jasmin, and the broad-leaved
 Myrtle,

(Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love !),
 And watch the clouds, that late were rich with
 light,
 Slow saddening round, and mark the star of eve
 Serenely brilliant (such should wisdom be)
 Shine opposite ! How exquisite the scents
 Snatched from yon bean-field ! and the world so
 hushed !
 The stilly murmur of the distant sea
 Tells us of silence.

And that simplest lute,
 Placed length-ways in the clasping casement,
 hark !
 How by the desultory breeze caressed,
 Like some coy maid half yielding to her lover,
 It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs
 Tempt to repeat the wrong ! And now, its strings
 Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
 Over delicious surges sink and rise,
 Such a soft floating witchery of sound
 As twilight Elfin make, when they at eve
 Voyage on gentle gales from Fairy-land,
 Where Melodies round honey-dropping flowers,
 Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
 Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untamed
 wing !
 O ! the one life within us and abroad,
 Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,
 A light in sound, a sound-like power in light,
 Rhythm in all thought, and joyance everywhere—
 Methinks, it should have been impossible
 Not to love all things in a world so filled ;
 Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air
 Is Music slumbering on her instrument.

And thus, my love ! as on the midway slope
 Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon,
 Whilst through my half-closed eye-lids I behold
 The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the main,
 And tranquil muse upon tranquillity ;
 Full many a thought uncalled and undetained,
 And many idle flitting phantasies,
 Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
 As wild and various as the random gales
 That swell and flutter on this subject lute !

And what if all of animated nature
 Be but organic harps diversely framed,
 That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
 Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
 At once the Soul of each, and God of all ?

But thy more serious eye a mild reproof
 Darts, O beloved woman ! nor such thoughts
 Dim and unhallowed dost thou not reject
 And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
 Meek daughter in the family of Christ !
 Well hast thou said and holily dispraised
 These shapings of the unregenerate mind ;
 Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
 On vain Philosophy's aye-babbling spring.
 For never guiltless may I speak of him,
 The Incomprehensible ! save when with awe
 I praise him, and with Faith that inly feels ;
 Who with his saving mercies healed me,
 A sinful and most miserable man,
 Wildered and dark, and gave me to possess
 Peace, and this cot, and thee, dear honoured Maid !

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

FROST AT MIDNIGHT

THE Frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owlet's cry
Came loud—and hark, again ! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings : save that at my side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed !

So calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings on of life,
Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not ;
Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit
By its own moods interprets, everywhere
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of Thought.

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
Fill up the intersperséd vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought !
My babe so beautiful ! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore,
And in far other scenes ! For I was reared
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,

And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
 But thou, my babe ! shalt wander like a breeze
 By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
 Of ancient mountains, and beneath the clouds,
 Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
 And mountain crags : so shalt thou see and hear
 The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
 Of that eternal language, which thy God
 Utters, who from eternity doth teach
 Himself in all, and all things in himself.
 Great universal Teacher ! he shall mould
 Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.
 Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
 Whether the summer clothe the general earth
 With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
 Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
 Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
 Smokes in the sun-thaw ; whether the eve-drops
 fall,
 Heard only in the trances of the blast,
 Or if the secret ministry of frost
 Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
 Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN

THIS Sycamore, oft musical with bees,—
 Such tents the Patriarchs loved ! O long unharmed
 May all its aged bows o'er-canopy
 The small round basin, which this jutting stone
 Keeps pure from falling leaves ! Long may the
 Spring,
 Quietly as a sleeping infant's breath,

Send up cold waters to the traveller
 With soft and even pulse ! Nor ever cease
 Yon tiny cone of sand its soundless dance,
 Which at the bottom, like a Fairy's Page,
 As merry and no taller, dances still,
 Nor wrinkles the smooth surface of the Fount.
 Here twilight is and coolness : here is moss,
 A soft seat, and a deep and ample shade.
 Thou may'st toil far and find no second tree.
 Drink, Pilgrim, here ! Here rest ! and if thy
 heart
 Be innocent, here too shalt thou refresh
 Thy spirit, listening to some gentle sound,
 Or passing gale or hum of murmuring bees !

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

THE POET IN THE CLOUDS

O ! it is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
 Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
 To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
 Or let the easily persuaded eyes
 Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
 Of a friend's fancy ; or with head bent low
 And cheek aslant see rivers flow with gold
 'Twixt crimson banks ; and then, a traveller, go
 From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous
 land !
 Or listening to the tide, with closed sight,
 Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand
 By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
 Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
 Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB

WHERE is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn ?
Where may the grave of that good man be ?—
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree !
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roar'd in the winter alone,
Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown.—
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust ;—
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

ODE TO EVENING

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs and dying gales ;

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-hair'd sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed :

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises, 'midst the twilight path
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum :
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some soften'd strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening
vale,

May not unseemly with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return !

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
Thy fragrant hours, and elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with
sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car :

Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallow'd pile,
Or upland fallows grey
Reflect its last cool gleam.

Or if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut
That from the mountain's side
Views wilds and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his show'rs, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve !
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light ;

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves,
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes :

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, rose-lipp'd Health
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy favourite name !

William Collins

HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest !
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By Fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung,
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay,
And Freedom shall a while repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there.

William Collins

A CRADLE SONG

O, MEN from the fields !
Come gently within.
Tread softly, softly,
O ! men coming in.

Mavourneen is going
From me and from you,
Where Mary will fold him
With mantle of blue !

From reek of the smoke
And cold of the floor,
And the peering of things
Across the half-door.

O, men from the fields !
Soft, softly come thro'.
Mary puts round him
Her mantle of blue.

Padraic Colum

HERACLITUS

THEY told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were
dead,

They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter
tears to shed.

I wept, as I remembered, how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down
the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian
guest,

A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales,
awake ;

For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot
take.

W. J. Cory

MIMNERMUS IN CHURCH

You promise heavens free from strife,
Pure truth, and perfect change of will ;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
So sweet, I fain would breathe it still :
Your chilly stars I can forgo,
This warm kind world is all I know.

You say there is no substance here,
One great reality above :
Back from that void I shrink in fear,
And child-like hide myself in love.
Show me what angels feel : till then,
I cling, a mere weak man, to men.

You bid me lift my mean desires
From faltering lips and fitful veins
To sexless souls, ideal quires,
Unwearied voices, wordless strains :
My mind with fonder welcome owns
One dear dead friend's remembered tones.

Forsooth the present we must give
To that which cannot pass away ;
All beauteous things for which we live
By laws of time and space decay.
But oh, the very reason why
I clasp them is because they die.

W. J. Cory

THE WISH

WELL then! I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree.
The very honey of all earthly joy
Does of all meats the soonest cloy;

And they, methinks, deserve my pity
Who for it can endure the stings,
The crowd and buzz and murmurings,
Of this great hive, the city.

Ah, yet, ere I descend to the grave,
May I a small house and large garden have;
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too!

And since love ne'er will from me flee,
A Mistress moderately fair,
And good as guardian angels are,
Only beloved and loving me.

O fountains! when in you shall I
Myself eased of unpeaceful thoughts espy?
O fields! O woods! when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade?

Here's the spring-head of Pleasure's flood:
Here's wealthy Nature's treasury,
Where all the riches lie that she
Has coin'd and stamp'd for good.

Pride and ambition here
Only in far-fetch'd metaphors appear;
Here nought but winds can hurtful murmurs
scatter,
And nought but Echo flatter.

The gods, when they descended hither
From heaven, did always choose their way :
And therefore we may boldly say
That 'tis the way to thither.

How happy here should I
And one dear She live, and embracing die !
She who is all the world, and can exclude
In deserts solitude.

I should have then this only fear :
Lest men, when they my pleasures see,
Should hither throng to live like me,
And so make a city here.

Abraham Cowley

HYMN TO LIGHT

WHEN, goddess, thou lift'st up thy waken'd head
Out of the morning's purple bed,
Thy quire of birds about thee play,
And all the joyful world salutes the rising day.

At thy appearance, grief itself is said
To shake his wings and rouse his head,
And cloudy care has often took
A gentle beamy smile reflected from thy look.

At thy appearance, fear itself grows bold ;
Thy sunshine melts away his cold.
Encouraged at the sight of thee,
To the cheek colour comes, and firmness to the knee.

Thou, Scythian-like, dost round thy lands above
The Sun's gilt tent for ever move,
And still as thou in pomp dost go,
The shining pageants of the world attend thy show.

All the world's bravery that delights our eyes
Is but thy several liveries,
Thou the rich dye on them bestowest,
Thy nimble pencil paints this landscape as thou
goest.

A crimson garment in the rose thou wear'st ;
A crown of studded gold thou bear'st ;
The virgin lilies in their white
Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked light !

Thou in the moon's bright chariot proud and gay
Dost thy bright wood of stars survey ;
And all the year dost with thee bring
Of thousand flowery lights thine own nocturnal
spring.

Nor amidst all these triumphs dost thou scorn
The humble glow-worms to adorn,
And with those living spangles gild
(O greatness without pride !) the bushes of the field.

Abraham Cowley

THE POPLAR FIELD

THE poplars are felled ; farewell to the shade
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade.
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they
grew ;
And now in the grass behold they are laid
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade !

The blackbird has fled to another retreat
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
And the scene where his melody charmed me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they
With a turf on my breast and a stone at my head
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man ;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
Have a being less durable even than he.

William Cowper

EPITAPH ON A HARE

HERE lies, whom hound did ne'er pursue,
Nor swifter greyhound follow,
Whose foot ne'er tainted morning dew,
Nor ear heard huntsman's halloo,

Old Tiney, surliest of his kind,
Who, nursed with tender care,
And to domestic bounds confined,
Was still a wild Jack-hare.

Though duly from my hand he took
His pittance every night,
He did it with a jealous look,
And, when he could, would bite.

His diet was of wheaten bread,
And milk, and oats, and straw,
Thistles, or lettuces instead,
With sand to scour his maw.

On twigs of hawthorn he regaled,
On pippins' russet peel ;
And, when his juicy salads failed,
Sliced carrot pleased him well.

A Turkey carpet was his lawn,
Whereon he loved to bound,
To skip and gambol like a fawn,
And swing his rump around.

His frisking was at evening hours,
For then he lost his fear ;
But most before approaching showers,
Or when a storm drew near.

Eight years and five round-rolling moons
He thus saw steal away,
Dozing out all his idle noons,
And every night at play.

I kept him for his humour' sake,
For he would oft beguile
My heart of thoughts that made it ache,
And force me to a smile.

But now beneath this walnut shade
He finds his long last home,
And waits, in snug concealment laid,
Till gentler Puss shall come.

He, still more agèd, feels the shocks
From which no care can save,
And, partner once of Tiney's box,
Must soon partake his grave.

William Cowper

THE CASTAWAY

OBSUREST night involved the sky,
The Atlantic billows roared,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Washed headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast,
With warmer wishes sent.
He loved them both, but both in
Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay ;
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away ;
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted : nor his friends had fail'd
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevail'd,
That, pitiless perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford ;
And such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delay'd not to bestow.
But he (they knew) nor ship nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seem'd, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them ;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld ;
And so long he, with unspent power,
His destiny repelled ;
And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried " Adieu ! "

At length his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in every blast,
Could catch the sound no more ;
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him ; but the page
Of narrative sincere,
That tells his name, his worth, his age,
Is wet with Anson's tear :
And tears by bards or heroes shed
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
A more enduring date :
But misery still delights to trace
Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allay'd,
No light propitious shone,
When, snatched from all effectual aid,
We perished, each alone :
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.
William Cowper

THE DEAR BARGAIN

LORD, what is man ? why should he cost Thee
So dear ? what had his ruin lost Thee ?
Lord, what is man ? that Thou has over-bought
So much a thing of nought.

Love is too kind, I see, and can
Make but a simple merchant man.
'Twas for such sorry merchandise
Bold painters have put out his eyes.

Alas, sweet Lord, what were't to Thee
If there were no such worms as we ?
Heav'n ne'ertheless still Heav'n would be.

Should mankind dwell
In the deep Hell,
What have *his* woes to do with Thee ?

Let him go weep
O'er his own wounds :
Seraphim will not sleep
Nor spheres let fall their faithful rounds,
Still would the youthful Spirits sing,
And still Thy spacious palace ring ;
Still would those beauteous Ministers of light
Burn all as bright

And bow their flaming heads before Thee,
Still thrones and dominations would adore Thee,
Still would those ever-wakeful sons of fire

Keep warm Thy praise

Both nights and days

And teach Thy loved Name to their noble lyre.

Let froward dust then do its kind :

And give itself for sport to the proud wind.

Why should a piece of peevish clay plead shares
In the eternity of Thy old cares ?

Why should'st Thou bow Thine awful breast to see
What mine own madness hath done with me ?

Should not the King still keep His throne
Because some desperate fool's undone ?

Or will the world's illustrious eyes

Weep for every worm that dies ?

Will the gallant Sun

E'er the less glorious run ?

Will he hang down his golden head

Or e'er the sooner seek his Western bed,

Because some foolish fly

Grows wanton and will die ?

O my Saviour make me see

How dearly Thou hast paid for me,

That lost again, my life may prove

As then in Death, so now in Love.

Richard Crashaw

VERSES FROM THE SHEPHERDS' HYMN

We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,

Young dawn of our eternal day ;

We saw Thine eyes break from the East,

And chase the trembling shades away :

We saw Thee, and we blest the sight,
We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light.

Poor world, said I, what wilt thou do

To entertain this starry stranger ?

Is this the best thou canst bestow—

A cold and not too cleanly manger ?

Contend, the powers of heaven and earth,

To fit a bed for this huge birth.

Proud world, said I, cease your contest,

And let the mighty babe alone,

The phoenix builds the phoenix' nest,

Love's architecture is His own.

The babe, whose birth embraves this morn,

Made His own bed ere He was born.

I saw the curl'd drops, soft and slow,

Come hovering o'er the place's head,

Off'ring their whitest sheets of snow,

To furnish the fair infant's bed.

Forbear, said I, be not too bold,

Your fleece is white, but 'tis too cold.

I saw th' obsequious seraphim

Their rosy fleece of fire bestow,

For well they now can spare their wings,

Since Heaven itself lies here below.

Well done, said I ; but are you sure

Your down, so warm, will pass for pure ?

No, no, your King's not yet to seek

Where to repose His royal head ;

See, see how soon His new-bloom'd cheek

'Twixt mother's breasts is gone to bed.

Sweet choice, said we, no way but so,

Not to lie cold, yet sleep in snow !

She sings Thy tears asleep, and dips
 Her kisses in Thy weeping eye;
 She spreads the red leaves of Thy lips,
 That in their buds yet blushing lie.
 She 'gainst those mother diamonds tries
 The points of her young eagle's eyes.

Welcome—tho' not to those gay flies,
 Gilded i' th' beams of earthly beings,
 Slippery souls in smiling eyes—
 But to poor shepherds, homespun things,
 Whose wealth's their flocks, whose wit's to be
 Well read in their simplicity.

Yet, when young April's husband show'rs
 Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,
 We'll bring the first-born of her flowers,
 To kiss Thy feet and crown Thy head.
 To thee, dread Lamb! whose love must keep
 The shepherds while they feed their sheep.

To Thee, meek Majesty, soft King
 Of simple graces and sweet loves!
 Each of us his lamb will bring,
 Each his pair of silver doves!
 At last, in fire of Thy fair eyes,
 Ourselves become our own best sacrifice!

Richard Crashaw

UPON THE BOOK AND THE PICTURE OF THE SERAPHICAL SAINT TERESA

O THOU undaunted daughter of desires!
 By all thy dower of lights and fires;
 By all the eagle in thee, all the dove;
 By all thy lives and deaths of love;

By thy large draughts of intellectual day,
And by thy thirsts of love more large than they ;
By all thy brim-filled bowls of fierce desire,
By thy last morning's draught of liquid fire ;
By the full kingdom of that final kiss
That seized thy parting soul, and sealed thee His ;
By all the Heav'n thou hast in Him,
(Fair sister of the seraphim !)
By all of Him we have in thee ;
Leave nothing of myself in me.
Let me so read thy life, that I
Unto all life of mine may die.

Richard Crashaw

THE NIGHTINGALE

HER supple breast thrills out
Sharp airs, and staggers in a warbling doubt
Of dallying sweetness, hovers o'er her skill,
And folds in waver'd notes, with a trembling bill,
The pliant series of her slippery song ;
Then starts she suddenly into a throng
Of short thick sobs, whose thund'ring volleys float
And roll themselves over her lubric throat
In panting murmurs, 'stilled out of her breast,
That ever-bubbling spring, the sugared nest
Of her delicious soul, that there does lie
Bathing in streams of liquid melody ;
In that sweet soil it seems a holy quire,
Founded to th' name of great Apollo's lyre ;
Whose silver roof rings with the sprightly notes
Of sweet-lipped angel-imps, that swill their throats
In cream of morning Helicon, and then
Prefer soft anthems to the ears of men,

To woo them from their beds, still murmuring
That men can sleep while they their matins sing ;—
Most divine service ! whose so early lay
Prevents the eyelids of the blushing day.

Richard Crashaw

HAME, HAME, HAME

HAME, hame, hame, hame fain wad I be,
O, hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie !

When the flower is i' the bud and the leaf is on
the tree,
The larks shall sing me hame in my ain countrie.
Hame, hame, hame, hame fain wad I be,
O, hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie !

The green leaf o' loyaltie's begun for to fa',
The bonnie white rose it is withering an' a' ;
But I'll water 't wi' the blude of usurping tyrannie,
An' green it will grow in my ain countrie.

O, there's naught frae ruin my country can save
But the keys o' kind heaven to open the grave :
That a' the noble martyrs wha died for loyaltie
May rise again and fight for their ain countrie.

The great are now gane, a' wha ventured to save,
The new grass is springing on the top o' their
grave ;
But the sun thro' the mirk blinks blythe in my c'e,
" I'll shine on ye yet in yere ain countrie."

Hame, hame, hame, hame fain wad I be,
Hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie !

Allan Cunningham

LET OTHERS SING

LET others sing of Knights and Paladines
In agèd accents and untimely words,
Paint shadows in imaginary lines,
Which well the reach of their high wit records :
But I must sing of thee, and those fair eyes,
Authentic shall my verse in time to come,
When yet th' unborn shall say, Lo, where she lies !
Whose beauty made him speak, that else was dumb !
These are the arcs, the trophics I erect,
That fortify thy name against old age ;
And these thy sacred virtues must protect
Against the Dark, and Time's consuming rage.
Though th' error of my youth in them appear,
Suffice, they show I lived, and loved thee dear.
Samuel Daniel

THE LARK NOW LEAVES HIS WAT'RY NEST

THE lark now leaves his wat'ry nest
And climbing shakes his dewy wings.
He takes this window for the East,
And to implore your light he sings—
Awake, awake ! the morn will never rise
Till she can dress her beauty at your eyes.
The merchant bows unto the seaman's star,
The ploughman from the sun his season takes ;
But still the lover wonders what they are
Who look for day before his mistress wakes.
Awake, awake ! break through your veils of lawn !
Then draw your curtains, and begin the dawn !
Sir W. Davenant

A RUNNABLE STAG

WHEN the pods went pop on the broom, green
broom,

And apples began to be golden-skinned,
We harboured a stag in the priory coomb,
And we feathered his trail up-wind, up-wind,
We feathered his trail up-wind—

A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag, a kingly crop,
Brow, bay, and tray, and three on top,
A stag, a runnable stag.

Then the huntsman's horn rang yap, yap, yap,
And "Forwards" we heard the harbourer shout ;
But 'twas only a brocket that broke a gap
In the beechen underwood, driven out
From the underwood antlered out.

By warrant and might of the stag, the stag,
The runnable stag, whose lordly mind
Was bent on sleep, though beamed and tined
He stood, a runnable stag.

So we tufted the covert till afternoon
With Tinkerman's Pup and Bell-of-the-North ;
And hunters were sulky and hounds out of tune
Before we tufted the right stag forth,
Before we tufted him forth—

The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
The runnable stag, with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay, and tray, and three on top,
The royal and runnable stag.

It was Bell-of-the-North and Tinkerman's Pup
That stuck to the scent till the copse was drawn.
"Tally ho ! tally ho !" and the hunt was up,

The tufties whipped and the pack laid on,
The resolute pack laid on.

And the stag of warrant away at last,
The runnable stag, the same, the same,
His hoofs on fire, his horns like flame,
A stag, a runnable stag.

“ Let your gelding be : if you check or chide
He stumbles at once and you're out of the hunt ;
For three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
On hunters accustomed to bear the brunt,
Accustomed to bear the brunt,
Are after the runnable stag, the stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay, and tray, and three on top,
The right, the runnable stag.

By perilous paths in coomb and dell,
The heather, the rocks, and the river-bed,
The pace grew hot, for the scent lay well,
And a runnable stag goes right ahead,
The quarry went right ahead—
Ahead, ahead, and fast and far ;
His antlered crest, his cloven hoof,
Brow, bay, and tray, and three aloof,
The stag, the runnable stag.

For a matter of twenty miles or more,
By the densest hedge and the highest wall,
Through herds of bullocks he baffled the lore
Of harbourer, huntsman, hounds and all,
Of harbourer, hounds, and all—
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
He ran, and he never was caught alive,
This stag, this runnable stag.

When he turned at bay in the leafy gloom,
In the emerald gloom where the brook ran deep,
He heard in the distance the rollers boom,
And he saw in a vision of peaceful sleep—
In a wonderful vision of sleep,
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag, in a jewelled bed,
Under the sheltering ocean dead,
A stag, a runnable stag.

So a fateful hope lit up his eye,
And he opened his nostrils wide again,
And he tossed his branching antlers high
As he headed the hunt down Charlock glen,
As he raced down the echoing glen
For five miles more, the stag, the stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
Not to be caught now, dead or alive,
The stag, the runnable stag.

Three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
Three hundred horses as gallant and free,
Beheld him escape on the evening tide,
Far out till he sank in the Severn Sea,
Till he sank in the depths of the sea—
The stag, the buoyant stag, the stag
That slept at last in a jewelled bed
Under the sheltering ocean spread,
The stag, the runnable stag.

John Davidson

THE LITTLENES OF MAN

I KNOW my body's of so frail a kind,
As force without, fevers within can kill ;
I know the heavenly nature of my mind,
But 'tis corrupted both in wit and will :

I know my Soul hath power to know all things,
Yet is she blind and ignorant in all ;
I know I am one of Nature's little kings,
Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall.

I know my life's a pain and but a span,
I know my sense is mock'd with everything :
And to conclude, I know myself a man,
Which is a proud, and yet a wretched thing.
Sir John Davies

THE EAST IN GOLD

SOMEHOW this world is wonderful at times,
As it has been from early morn in May ;
Since I first heard the cock-a-doodle-do,
Timekeeper on green farms—at break of day.

Soon after that I heard ten thousand birds,
Which made me think an angel brought a bin
Of golden grain, and none was scattered yet—
To rouse those birds to make that merry din.

I could not sleep again, for such wild cries,
And went out early into their green world ;
And then I saw what set their little tongues
To scream for joy—they saw the East in gold.
W. H. Davies

SWEET STAY-AT-HOME

SWEET Stay-at-Home, sweet Well-content,
Thou knowest of no strange continent :
Thou hast not felt thy bosom keep
A gentle motion with the deep ;
Thou hast not sailed in Indian seas,
Where scent comes forth in every breeze.
Thou hast not seen the rich grape grow
For miles, as far as eyes can go ;
Thou hast not seen a summer's night
When maids could sew by a worm's light ;
Nor the North Sea in spring send out
Bright trees that like birds flit about
In solid cages of white ice—
Sweet Stay-at-Home, sweet Love-one-place.
Thou hast not seen black fingers pick
White cotton when the bloom is thick,
Nor heard black throats in harmony ;
Nor hast thou sat on stones that lie
Flat on the earth, that once did rise
To hide proud kings from common eyes.
Thou hast not seen plains full of bloom
Where green things had such little room
They pleased the eye like fairer flowers—
Sweet Stay-at-Home, all these long hours.
Sweet Well-content, sweet Love-one-place,
Sweet, simple maid, bless thy dear face ;
For thou hast made more homely stuff
Nurture thy gentle self enough ;
I love thee for a heart that's kind—
Not for the knowledge in thy mind.

W. H. Davies

LEISURE

WHAT is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare ?

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

W. H. Davies

THE KINGFISHER

It was the Rainbow gave thee birth,
And left thee all her lovely hues ;
And, as her mother's name was Tears,
So runs it in thy blood to choose
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
In company with trees that weep.

Go you and, with such glorious hues,
Live with proud Peacocks in green parks ;
On lawns as smooth as shining glass,
Let every feather show its mark ;

Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings
Before the windows of proud kings.

Nay, lovely Bird, thou art not vain ;
Thou hast no proud ambitious mind ;
I also love a quiet place
That's green, away from all mankind ;
A lonely pool, and let a tree
Sigh with her bosom over me.

W. H. Davies

CONTENT

ART thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers ?

O, sweet content !

Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed ?

O, punishment !

Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed

To add to golden numbers golden numbers ?

O, sweet content ! O sweet, O sweet content !

Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;

Honest labour bears a lovely face ;

Then hey nonny nonny—hey nonny nonny !

Can'st drink the waters of the crisped spring ?

O, sweet content !

Swim'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own
tears ?

O, punishment !

Then he that patiently want's burden bears,

No burden bears, but is a king, a king !

O, sweet content ! O sweet, O sweet content !

Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;

Honest labour bears a lovely face ;

Then hey nonny nonny—hey nonny nonny !

Thomas Dekker

THE LINNET

UPON this leafy bush
With thorns and roses in it,
Flutters a thing of light,
A twittering linnet,
And all the throbbing world
Of dew and sun and air
By this small parcel of life
Is made more fair ;
As if each bramble-spray
And mounded gold-wreathed furze,
Harebell and little thyme,
Were only hers ;
As if this beauty and grace
Did to one bird belong,
And, at a flutter of wing,
Might vanish in song.

Walter de la Mare

THE GHOST

" Who knocks ? " " I, who was beautiful
Beyond all dreams to restore,
I from the roots of the dark thorn am hither,
And knock on the door."

" Who speaks ? " " I—once was my speech
Sweet as the bird's on the air,
When echo lurks by the waters to heed ;
'Tis I speak thee fair."

" Dark is the hour ! " " Aye, and cold."
" Lone is my house." " Ah, but mine ? "
" Sight, touch, lips, eyes gleamed in vain."
" Long dead these to thine."

Silence. Still faint on the porch
Broke the flames of the stars.
In gloom groped a hope-wearied hand
Over keys, bolts, and bars.

A face peered. All the grey night
In chaos of vacancy shone ;
Nought but vast sorrow was there—
The sweet cheat gone.

Walter de la Mare

THE THREE STRANGERS

FAR are those tranquil hills,
Dyed with fair evening's rose ;
On urgent, secret errand bent,
A traveller goes.

Approach him strangers three,
Barefooted, cowled ; their eyes
Scan the lone, hastening solitary
With dumb surmise.

One instant in close speech
With them he doth confer :
God-spced, he hasteneth on,
That anxious traveller . . .

I was that man—in a dream :
And each world's night in vain
I patient wait on sleep to unveil
Those vivid hills again.

Would that they three could know
How yet burns on in me
Love—from one lost in Paradise—
For their grave courtesy.

Walter de la Mare

ARABIA

FAR are the shades of Arabia,
Where the Princes ride at noon,
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,
Under the ghost of the moon ;
And so dark is that vaulted purple
Flowers in the forest rise
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars
Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
In my heart, when out of dreams
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
Descry her gliding streams ;
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired Musicians
In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forests ;
No beauty on earth I see
But shadowed with that dream recalls
Her loveliness to me :
Still eyes look coldly upon me,
Cold voices whisper and say—
“ He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,
They have stolen his wits away.”

Walter de la Mare

BEFORE DAWN

DIM-BERRIED is the mistletoe
With globes of sheenless grey,
The holly mid ten thousand thorns
Smoulders its fires away :
And in the manger Jesu sleeps
This Christmas Day.

Bull unto bull with hollow throat
Makes echo every hill,
Cold sheep in pastures thick with snow
The air with bleatings fill ;
While of his mother's heart this Babe
Takes His sweet will.

All flowers and butterflies lie hid,
The blackbird and the thrush
Pipe but a little as they flit
Restless from bush to bush ;
Even to the robin Gabriel hath
Cried softly, " Hush ! "

Now night is astir with burning stars
In darkness of the snow ;
Burdened with frankincense and myrrh
And gold the Strangers go
Into a dusk where one dim lamp
Burns faintly, Lo !

No snowdrop yet its small head nods,
In winds of winter drear ;
No lark at casement in the sky
Sings matins shrill and clear ;
Yet in this frozen mirk the Dawn
Breathes, Spring is here !

Walter de la Mare

THE RIDDLERS

"Thou solitary!" the Blackbird cried,
"I," from the happy Wren,
Linnet and Blackcap, Woodlark, Thrush,
Perched all upon a sweetbrier bush,
"Have come at cold of midnight-tide
To ask thee, Why and when
Grief smote thy heart so thou dost sing
In solemn hush of evening,
So sorrowfully, lovelorn Thing—
Nay, nay, not sing, but rave, but wail,
Most melancholic Nightingale?
Do not the dews of darkness steep
All pinings of the day in sleep?
Why, then, when rocked in starry nest
We mutely couch, secure, at rest,
Doth thy lone heart delight to make
Music for sorrow's sake?"

A Moon was there. So still her beam,
It seemed the whole world lay in dream,
Lulled by the watery sea.
And from her leafy night-hung nook
Upon this stranger soft did look
The Nightingale: sighed he:—

"'Tis strange, my friend; the Kingfisher
But yesternorn conjured me here
Out of his green and gold to say
Why thou, in splendour of the noon,
Wearest of colour but golden shoon,
And else dost thee array
In a most sombre suit of black?"

' Surely,' he sighed, ' some load of grief,
Past all our thinking—and belief—
Must weigh upon his back !'
Do, then, in turn, tell me, if joy
Thy heart as well as voice employ,
Why dost thou now, most Sable, shine
In plumage woefuller far than mine ?
Thy silence is a sadder thing
Than any dirge I sing ! "

Thus, then, these two small birds, perched there,
Breathed a strange riddle both did share
Yet neither could expound,
And we—who sing but as we can,
In the small knowledge of a man—
Have we an answer found ?
Nay, some are happy whose delight
Is hid even from themselves from sight ;
And some win peace who spend
The skill of words to sweeten despair
Of finding consolation where
Life has but one dark end ;
Who, in rapt solitude, tell o'er
A tale as lovely as forlore,
Into the midnight air.

Walter de la Mare

GO AND CATCH A FALLING STAR

Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me where all past years are,
Or who cleft the Devil's foot ;

Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
 And find
 What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.
If thou beest born to strange sights,
 Things invisible to see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights
 Till age snow white hairs on thee ;
Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
All strange wonders that befell thee,
 And swear,
 No where
Lives a woman true and fair.
If thou find'st one, let me know ;
 Such a pilgrimage were sweet.
Yet do not ; I would not go,
 Though at next door we might meet.
Though she were true when you meet her,
And last till you write your letter,
 Yet she
 Will be
False, ere I come, to two or three.

John Donne

THE UNRULY SUN

Busy old fool, unruly Sun,
Why dost thou thus,
Through windows, and through curtains call on us ?
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run ?
 Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
 Late school boys, and sour prentices,

Go tell Court-huntsmen, that the King will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices ;
Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

Thy beams so reverend and strong
Why shouldst thou think ?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long :
If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Look, and to-morrow late tell me,
Whether both the Indias of spice and mine
Be where thou leftst them, or lie here with me.
Ask for those Kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear, All here in one bed lay.

She's all States, and all Princes, I,
Nothing else is.
Princes do but play us ; compar'd to this,
All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
Thou, sun, art half as happy as we,
In that the world's contracted thus ;
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art every where ;
This bed thy centre is, these walls, thy sphere.

John Donne

THE RELIQUE

WHEN my grave is broken up again
Some second guest to entertain,
(For graves have learned that womanhead
To be to more than one a bed)

And he that digs it spies
A bracelet of bright hair about the bone,
Will he not let us alone,
And think that there a loving couple lies,
Who thought that this device might be some way
To make their souls, at the last busy day,
Meet at this grave, and make a little stay ?

If this fall in a time or land
Where Mass-devotion doth command,
Then he that digs us up will bring
Us to the bishop or the king,
To make us relics, then
Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen, and I
A something else thereby ;
All women shall adore us and some men ;
And since at such time miracles are sought,
I would have that age by this paper taught,
What miracles we harmless lovers wrought.

First we loved well and faithfully,
Yet knew not what we loved, nor why ;
Difference of sex we never knew,
No more than Guardian Angels do ;
Coming and going we
Perchance might kiss, but yet between those meals
Our hands ne'er touched the seals,
Which nature, injured by late law, set free :
These miracles we did ; but now, alas,
All measure and all language I should pass,
Should I tell what a miracle she was.

John Donne

THE GOOD MORROW

I WONDER, by my troth, what thou and I
Did, till we loved ? were we not weaned till then ?
But sucked on country pleasures, childishly ?
Or snored we in the Seven Sleepers' den ?
'Twas so ; but this, all pleasures fancies be ;
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of
thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear ;
For love all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room an everywhere.
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone ;
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown,
Let us possess one world ; each hath one, and is
one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest ;
Where can we find two better hemispheres
Without sharp north, without declining west ?
Whatever dies, was not mixed equally ;
If our two loves be one, or thou and I
Love so alike that none can slacken, none can die.

John Donne

THE ECSTASY

WHERE, like a pillow on a bed,
A pregnant bank swelled up, to rest
The violet's declining head,
Sat we two, one another's best.

Our hands were firmly cèmented
With a fast balm which thence did spring ;
Our eye-beams twisted, and did thread
Our eyes upon one double string.
So to intergraft our hands, as yet
Was all the means to make us one ;
And pictures in our eyes to get
Was all our propagation.
As 'twixt two equal armies Fate
Suspends uncertain victory,
Our souls—which to advance their state
Were gone out—hung 'twixt her and me.
And whilst our souls negotiate there,
We like sepulchral statues lay ;
All day the same our postures were,
And we said nothing, all the day.
If any, so by love refined,
That he soul's language understood,
And by good love were grown all mind,
Within convenient distance stood,
He (though he knew not which soul spake
Because both meant, both spake the same)
Might thence a new concoction take,
And part far purer than he came.
This ecstasy doth unperplex
(We said) and tell us what we love,
We see by this, it was not sex,
We see, we saw not what did move :
But as all several souls contain
Mixture of things, they know not what,
Love these mixed souls doth mix again,
And makes both one, each this and that.
A single violet transplant,
The strength, the colour and the size

(All which before was poor and scant)
Redoubles still and multiplies.
When love with one another so
Interinanimates two souls,
That abler soul, which thence doth flow,
Defects of loveliness controls.
We then, who are this new soul, know
Of what we are composed and made ;
For th' Atomies of which we grow
Are souls whom no change can invade.

But O alas so long, so far
Our bodies why do we forbear ?
They are ours, though they are not we. We
are
The Intelligences, they the sphere.
We owe them thanks, because they thus
Did us to us at first convey ;
Yielded their forces, sense, to us,
Nor are dross to us, but allay.
On man heaven's influence works not so,
But that it first imprints the air,
So soul into the soul may flow,
Though it to body first repair.
As our blood labours to beget
Spirits, as like souls as it can,
Because such fingers need to knit
That subtle knot, which makes us man :
So must pure lovers' souls descend
T' affections and to faculties,
Which sense may reach and apprehend,
Else a great Prince in prison lies.
To our bodies turn we then, that so
Weak men on love revealed may look ;

Love's mysteries in souls do grow,
But yet the body is his book ;
And if some lover such as we
Have heard this dialogue of one,
Let him still mark us, he shall see
Small change, when we are to bodies gone.

John Donne

THE AUTUMNAL

No spring, nor summer beauty hath such grace
As I have seen in one autumnal face.
Young beauties force our love, and that's a rape ;
This doth but counsel, yet you cannot scape.
If t'were a shame to love, here 'twere no shame ;
Affection here takes reverence's name.
Were her first years the golden age ; that's true,
But now she's gold oft tried, and ever new.
That was her torrid and inflaming time,
This is her tolerable tropic clime.
Fair eyes, who asks more heat than comes from hence,
He in a fever wishes pestilence.
Call not these wrinkles, graves ; if graves they were,
They were love's graves ; for else he is nowhere.
Yet lies not love dead here, but here doth sit
Vow'd to this trench, like an anachorite.
And here, till hers, which must be his death, come,
He doth not dig a grave, but build a tomb.
Here dwells he, though he sojourn everywhere,
In progress, yet his standing house is here.
Here, where still evening is ; not noon, nor night ;
Where no voluptuousness, yet all delight.
In all her words, unto all hearers fit,
You may at revels, you at counsel, sit.

This is love's timber, youth his underwood ;
There he, as wine in June, enrages blood,
Which then comes seasonabliest, when our taste
And appetite to other things is past.
Xerxes' strange Lydian love, the platan tree,
Was lov'd for age, none being so large as she,
Or else because, being young, nature did bless
Her youth with age's glory, barrenness.
If we love things long sought, age is a thing
Which we are fifty years in compassing.
If transitory things, which soon decay,
Age must be loveliest at the latest day,
But name not winter faces, whose skin's slack ;
Lank, as an unthrif's purse ; but a soul's sack,
Whose eyes seek light within, for all here's shade ;
Whose mouths are holes, rather worn out, than
made ;
Whose every tooth to a several place is gone,
To vex their souls at resurrection ;
Name not these living death's-heads unto me,
For these, not ancient, but antique be.
I hate extremes ; yet I had rather stay
With tombs, than cradles, to wear out a day.
Since such love's natural lation is, may still
My love descend, and journey down the hill,
Not panting after growing beauties, so
I shall ebb out with them who homeward go.

John Donne

THE DREAM

IMAGE of her, whom I love more than she,
Whose fair impression in my faithful heart
Makes me her medal, and makes her love me,
As kings do coins, to which their stamp imparts

The value : go, and take my heart from hence,
Which now is grown too great and good for me.
Honours oppress weak spirits, and our sense
Strong objects dull : the more, the less we see.
When you are gone, and Reason gone with you,
Then Fantasy is queen, and soul, and all ;
She can present joys meaner than you do ;
Convenient, and more proportional.
So, if I dream I have you, I have you ;
For all our joys are but fantastical.
And so I 'scape the pain, for pain is true ;
And Sleep, which locks up sense, doth lock up all.
After such a fruition, I shall wake,
And, but the waking, nothing shall repent ;
And shall to Love more thankful sonnets make,
Than if more honours, tears, and pains were spent.
But, dearest heart, and dearer image, stay,
Alas ! true joys at best are dream enough ;
Though you stay here, you pass too fast away ;
For even at first Life's taper is a snuff.
Filled with her love, may I be rather grown
Mad with much heart, than idiot with none.

John Donne

THE ANNIVERSARY

ALL kings, and all their favourites,
All glory of honours, beauties, wits,
The sun itself, which makes time, as they pass,
Is elder by a year now than it was
When thou and I first one another saw.
All other things to their destruction draw,
Only our love hath no decay ;

This no to-morrow hath, nor yesterday ;
Running it never runs from us away,
But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.

Two graves must hide thine and my corse ;
If one might, death were no divorce.
Alas ! as well as other princes, we
—Who prince enough in one another be—
Must leave at last in death these eyes and ears,
Oft fed with true oaths, and with sweet salt tears ;
But souls where nothing dwells but love
—All other thoughts being inmates—then shall
 prove
This or a love increased there above,
When bodies to their graves, souls from their
 graves remove.

And then we shall be thoroughly blest ;
But now no more than all the rest.
Here upon earth we're kings, and none but we
Can be such kings, nor of such subjects be.
Who is so safe as we ? where none can do
Treason to us, except one of us two.

True and false fears let us refrain,
Let us love nobly, and live, and add again
Years and years unto years, until we attain
To write threescore ; this is the second of our reign.

John Donne

HYMN TO GOD, MY GOD, IN MY SICKNESS

SINCE I am coming to that Holy room,
Where, with thy Quire of Saints for evermore,
I shall be made thy Music ; As I come
I tune the Instrument here at the door,
And what I must do then, think here before.

Whilst my Physicians by their love are grown
Cosmographers, and I their Map, who lie
Flat on this bed, that by them may be shown
That this is my South-west discovery
Per fretum febris, by these straits to die,

I joy that in these straits I see my West ;
For, though their currents yield return to none,
What shall my West hurt me ? As West and East
In all flat Maps (and I am one) are one,
So death doth touch the Resurrection.

Is the Pacific Sea my home ? Or are
The Eastern riches ? Is Jerusalem ?
Anyan,¹ and Magellan, and Gibraltar,
All straits, and none but straits, are ways to them,
Whether where Japhet dwelt, or Ham, or Shem.

We think that Paradise and Calvary,
Christ's Cross, and Adam's tree, stood in one
place ;
Look, Lord, and find both Adams met in me ;
As the first Adam's sweat surrounds my face,
May the last Adam's blood my soul embrace.

So, in his purple wrapp'd receive me, Lord,
By these his thorns give me his other Crown ;
And as to others' souls I preach'd thy word,
Be this my Text, my Sermon to mine own,
Therefore, that he may raise, the Lord throws
down.

John Donne

¹ Behring.

GOOD FRIDAY

(RIDING WESTWARD)

HENCE is't that I am carried towards the west
This day, when my soul's form bends to the east ;
Yet dare I almost be glad, I do not see
That spectacle of too much weight for me.
Who sees God's face, that is self-life, must die ;
What a death were it then to see God die ?
It made his own lieutenant, Nature, shrink ;
It made his footstool crack, and the sun wink.
Could I behold those hands which span the poles,
And tune all spheres at once, pierced with those
holes ?

Could I behold that endless height, which is
Zenith to us and our Antipodes,
Humbled below us ? or that blood, which is
The seat of all our souls, if not of his,
Made dirt of dust ? or that flesh, which was worn
By God for his apparel, ragged and torn ?
Though these things as I ride be from mine eye
They're present yet unto my memory,
For that looks towards them ; and Thou look'st
toward me,

O Saviour as thou hang'st upon the tree.
I turn my back to thee, but to receive
Corrections ; till thy mercies bid thee leave.
O think me worth thine anger, punish me,
Burn off my rust, and my deformity ;
Restore thine image so much by thy grace,
That thou may'st know me, and I'll turn my face.

John Donne

DEATH, BE NOT PROUD

DEATH, be not proud, though some have callèd
thee

Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so :
For those, whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death ; nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy picture be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must
flow ;

And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones and souls' delivery.
Thou'rt slave to Fate, chance, kings, and desperate
men,

And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell ;
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke ; why swell'st thou
then ?

One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And Death shall be no more : Death, thou shalt
die.

John Donne

TEARS

WEEP you no more, sad fountains ;
What need you flow so fast ?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heaven's sun doth gently waste.
But my sun's heavenly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets ;
Doth not the sun rise smiling
When fair at eve he sets ?
Rest you, then, rest, sad eyes,
Melt not in weeping
While she lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

John Dowland

THE PARTING

SINCE there's no help, come let us kiss and part,—
Nay I have done, you get no more of me ;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free ;
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes,
—Now if thou would'st, when all have given
him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover !
Michael Drayton

IMMORTALITY IN SONG

How many paltry, foolish, painted things,
That now in coaches trouble every street,
Shall be forgotten, whom no poet sings,
Ere they be well wrapped in their winding-sheet ?

Where I to thee eternity shall give,
When nothing else remaineth of these days,
And queens hereafter shall be glad to live
Upon the alms of thy superfluous praise ;
Virgins and matrons, reading these my rhymes,
Shall be so much delighted with thy story,
That they shall grieve they lived not in these times,
To have seen thee, their sex's only glory :

So shalt thou fly above the vulgar throng,
Still to survive in my immortal song.

Michael Drayton

A SUMMER'S EVE

CLEAR had the day been from the dawn,
All chequered was the sky,
Thin clouds, like scarves of cobweb lawn,
Veiled heaven's most glorious eye.
The wind had no more strength than this,
That leisurely it blew,
To make one leaf the next to kiss,
That closely by it grew.
The flowers, like brave embroidered girls,
Looked as they most desired
To see whose head with orient pearls
Most curiously was tyred.

The rills, that on the pebbles played
Might now be heard at will ;
This world the only music made,
Else everything was still.
And to itself the subtle air
Such sovereignty assumes,
That it receive too large a share
From nature's rich perfumes.

Michael Drayton

MADRIGAL

THIS life, which seems so fair,
Is like a bubble blown up in the air
By sporting children's breath,
Who chase it everywhere,
And strive who can most motion it bequeath :
And though it sometime seem of its own might
Like to an eye of gold to be fixed there,
And firm to hover in that empty height,
That only is because it is so light.
—But in that pomp it doth not long appear ;
For even when most admired, it in a thought,
As swell'd from nothing, doth dissolve in naught.

William Drummond

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST

THE last and greatest Herald of Heaven's King,
Girt with rough skins, hies to the deserts wild,
Among that savage brood the woods forth bring,
Which he than man more harmless found and mild.
His food was locusts, and what young doth spring,
With honey that from virgin hives distilled ;
Parched body, hollow eyes, some uncouth thing
Made him appear, long since from earth exiled.
There burst he forth : All ye whose hopes rely
On God, with me amidst these deserts mourn ;
Repent, repent, and from old errors turn !
—Who listened to his voice, obeyed his cry ?
Only the echoes, which he made relent,
Rung from their flinty caves, Repent ! Repent !

William Drummond

PHOEBUS, ARISE

PHOEBUS, arise,
And paint the sable skies
With azure, white, and red !
Rouse Memnon's mother from her Tithon's bed,
That she thy carrier may with roses spread ;
The nightingales thy coming each where sing ;
Make an eternal spring,
Give life to this dark world which lieth dead ;
Spread forth thy golden hair
In larger locks than thou wast wont before,
And, emperor-like, decore
With diadem of pearl thy temples fair ;
Chase hence the ugly night,
Which serves but to make dear thy glorious light
This is that happy morn
That day, long-wished day,
Of all my life so dark
(If cruel stars have not my ruin sworn,
And fates not hope betray),
Which, only white, deserves
A diamond for ever should it mark :
This is the morn should bring unto this grove
My love, to hear and recompense my love. -
Fair king, who all preserves,
But show thy blushing beams
And thou two sweeter eyes
Shalt see than those which by Peneus' streams
Did once thy heart surprise :
Nay, suns, which shine as clear
As thou when two thou did to Rome appear !
Now, Flora, deck thyself in fairest guise ;

If that ye, Winds, would hear
A voice surpassing far Amphion's lyre,
Your stormy chiding stay ;
Let Zephyr only breathe,
And with her tresses play,
Kissing sometimes these purple ports of death
The winds all silent are,
And Phoebus in his chair,
Ensafroning sea and air,
Makes vanish every star :
Night like a drunkard reels
Beyond the hills to shun his flaming wheels ;
The fields with flowers are decked in every hue ;
The clouds bespangle with bright gold their blue ;
Here is the pleasant place,
And every thing, save her, who all should grace.

William Drummond

A SONG FOR SAINT CECILIA'S DAY

From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began :
When Nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high :—
“ Arise, ye more than dead ! ”
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began :
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell ?
When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wond'ring, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound.
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell ?

The trumpet's loud clangour
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger
And mortal alarms.
The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries :—" Hark ! the foes come !
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat."

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whisper'd by the warbling lute.
Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs, and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion
For the fair, disdainful dame.

But, O ! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise ?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above !

Orpheus could lead the savage race,
 And trees uprooted left their place,
 Sequacious of the lyre.
 But bright Cecilia rais'd the wonder higher,
 When to her organ vocal breath was given,
 And angels heard, and straight appear'd,
 Mistaking Earth for Heaven.

Grand Chorus.

As from the power of sacred lays,
 The spheres began to move,
 And sung the great Creator's praise
 To all the bless'd above :
 So when the last and dreadful hour
 This crumbling pageant shall devour,
 The trumpet shall be heard on high,
 The dead shall live, the living die,
 And music shall untune the sky.

John Dryden

THE FLOWERS OF THE FOREST

I've heard them lilting at our ewe-milking,
 Lasses a-lilting before the dawn of day ;
 But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning¹ :—
 The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At bughts² in the morning nae blythe lads are
 scorning ;
 The lasses are lanely, and dowie,³ and wae ;
 Nae daffing,⁴ nae gabbing, but sighing and sabbing,
 Ilk ane lifts her leglin,⁵ and hies her away.

¹ Grass path in corn-fields.

² Dreary.

⁴ Joking.

² Sheep-pens.

⁵ Pail.

In hairst,¹ at the shearing, nae youths now are
jeering :

The bandsters² are lyart,³ and runckled,⁴ and gray.
At fair or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching⁵—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, in the gloaming, nae swankies⁶ are roam-
ing

'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play ;
But ilk ane sits eerie, lamenting her dearie—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Deel and wae for the order sent our lads to the
Border !

The English, for ance, by ^{sat} ~~scathe~~ wan the day ;
The Flowers of the Forest, that fought aye the
foremost,

The prime of our land, lie cauld in the clay.

We'll hear'nae mair liltin' at our ewe-milking :
Women and bairns are heartless and wae,
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning :
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Jane Elliot

O, THE SAD DAY

O, THE sad day !

When friends shall shake their heads, and say
Of miserable me :—

“ Hark, how he groans !

Look, how he pants for breath !

See how he struggles with the pangs of death ! ”

¹ Harvest.

² Men who bind sheaves.

³ Hoary.

⁴ Wrinkled.

⁵ Coaxing.

⁶ Tull lads.

When they shall say of these dear eyes :—

“ How hollow, O, how dim they be !

Mark how his breast doth rise and swell

Against his potent enemy ! ”

When some old friend shall step to my bedside,

Touch my chill face, and thence shall gently slide,

But, when his next companions say :—

“ How does he do ? What hopes ? ” shall turn
away,

Answering only, with a lift-up hand :—

“ Who can his fate withstand ? ”

Then shall a gasp or two do more

Than e’er my rhetoric could before :

Persuade the world to trouble me no more—

Persuade the world to trouble me no more.

Thomas Flatman

TO HIS SLEEPING MISTRESS

OH, fair sweet face ! oh, eyes, celestial bright,

Twin stars in heaven, that now adorn the night !

Oh, fruitful lips, where cherries ever grow,

And damask cheeks, where all sweet beauties blow !

Oh, thou from head to foot divinely fair !

Cupid’s most cunning net’s made of that hair ;

And, as he weaves himself for curious eyes,

“ Oh me, oh me, I’m caught myself ! ” he cries :

Sweet rest about thee, sweet and golden sleep,

Soft peaceful thoughts, your hourly watches keep,

Whilst I in wonder sing this sacrifice,

To beauty sacred, and those angel eyes !

John Fletcher

IN PRAISE OF MELANCHOLY

HENCE, all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights

Wherein you spent your folly !
There's nought in this life sweet,
If man were wise to see't,
But only Melancholy,
O sweetest Melancholy !

Welcome, folded arms, and fixed eyes,
A sight that piercing mortifies,
A look that's fastened to the ground,
A tongue chained up without a sound !
Fountain-heads and pathless groves,
Places which pale passion loves !
Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
Are warmly housed, save bats and owls !
A midnight bell, a parting groan—
These are the sounds we feed upon ;
Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley . .
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy !

John Fletcher

MAN HIS OWN STAR

MAN is his own star ; and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man
Commands all light, all influence, all fate ;
Nothing to him falls early, or too late.
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.

John Fletcher

CALANTHA'S DIRGE

GLORIES, pleasures, pomps, delights and ease,
Can but please
Outward senses, when the mind
Is untroubled, or by peace refined.
Crowns may flourish and decay,
Beauties shine, but fade away.
Youth may revel, yet it must
Lie down in a bed of dust.
Earthly honours flow and waste,
Time alone doth change and last.
Sorrows mingled with contents prepare
Rest for care.
Love only reigns in death ; though art
Can find no comfort for a Broken Heart.

John Ford

THE SHEPHERDS' WONDER

LORD, when the wise men came from far,
Led to Thy cradle by a star,
Then did the shepherds too rejoice,
Instructed by Thy Angel's voice :
Blest were the wise men in their skill,
And shepherds in their harmless will.

Wise men in tracing Nature's laws
Ascend unto the highest Cause ;
Shepherds with humble fearfulness
Walk safely, though their Light be less :
Though wise men better know the way,
It seems no honest heart can stray.

There is no merit in the wise
But Love, (the shepherds' sacrifice) ;
Wise men, all ways of knowledge past,
To the Shepherds' wonder come at last :
To know can only wonder breed,
And not to know is wonder's seed.

A wise man at the altar bows
And offers up his studied vows,
And is received,—may not the tears,
Which spring too from a shepherd's fears,
And sighs upon his frailty spent,
Though not distinct, be eloquent ?

'Tis true, the object sanctifies
All passions which within us rise,
But since no creature comprehends
The Cause of causes, End of ends,
He who himself vouchsafes to know
Best pleases his Creator so.

When, then, our sorrows we apply
To our own wants and poverty,
When we look up in all distress
And our own misery confess,
Sending both thanks and prayers above—
Then, though we do not know, we love.

Sidney Godolphin

THE HAPPY TREE

THERE was a bright and happy tree ;
The wind with music laced its boughs :
Thither across the houseless sea
Came singing birds to house.

Men grudged the tree its happy eves,
Its happy dawns of eager sound ;
So all that crown and tower of leaves
They levelled with the ground.

They made an upright of the stem,
A cross-piece of a bough they made :
No shadow of their deed on them
The fallen branches laid.

But blithely, since the year was young,
When they a fitting hill did find,
There on the happy tree they hung
The Saviour of mankind.

Gerald Gould

AN EXCELLENT NEW BALLAD

My dear and only love, I pray
This noble world of thee
Be governed by no other sway
But purest monarchy ;
For if confusion have a part,
(Which virtuous souls abhor),
And hold a Synod in thy heart,
I'll never love thee more.

Like Alexander I will reign,
And I will reign alone ;
My thoughts did ever more disdain
A rival on my throne.
He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That puts it not unto the touch
To win, or lose, it all.

But I must rule and govern still
And always give the law,
And have each subject at my will
And all to stand in awe.
But 'gainst my battery, if I find
Thou shunn'st the prize so sore
As that thou sett'st me up a blind,
I'll never love thee more !

Or in the empire of thy heart,
Where I should solely be,
Another do pretend a part
And dares to vie with me,
Or if Committees thou erect,
And go on such a score,
I'll sing and laugh at thy neglect,
And never love thee more.

But if thou wilt be constant then,
And faithful of thy word ;
I'll make thee glorious by my pen
And famous by my sword,
I'll serve thee in such noble ways
Were never heard before !
I'll crown and deck thee all with bays,
And love thee evermore.

J. Graham, Marquis of Montrose

IN THE WILDERNESS

CHRIST of His gentleness
Thirsting and hungering
Walked in the wilderness ;
Soft words of grace He spoke
Unto lost desert-folk

That listened wondering.
He heard the bitterns call
From the ruined palace-wall,
Answered them brotherly.
He held communion
With the she-pelican
Of lonely piety.
Basilisk, cockatrice,
Flocked to His homilies,
With mail of dread device,
With monstrous barbed slings.
With eager dragon-eyes ;
Great rats on leather wings,
And poor blind broken things,
Foul in their miseries.
And ever with Him went,
Of all His wanderings
Comrade, with ragged coat,
Gaunt ribs—poor innocent—
Bleeding foot, burning throat,
The guileless old scape-goat ;
For forty nights and days
Followed in Jesus' ways,
Sure guard behind Him kept,
Tears like a lover wept.

Robert Graves

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

THE Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds :

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care :
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke !
How jocund did they drive their team afield !
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike the inevitable hour—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted
 vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstacy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade : nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learned to stray ;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture
decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered
muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply :
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind ?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires ;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of the unhonoured dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
“Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn ;

“There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noon-tide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

“Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove ;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

“One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree ;
Another came : nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he ;

“The next, with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him
borne,—

Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.”

THE EPITAPH

HERE rests his head upon the lap of earth
A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown ;
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send :
He gave to Misery (all he had) a tear,
He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),
The bosom of his Father and his God.

Thomas Gray

ON A FAVOURITE CAT, DROWNED IN A
TUB OF GOLDFISHES

'TWAS on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow,
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared :
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw ; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gazed, but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream :
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple to the view
Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw :
A whisker first, and then a claw
With many an ardent wish
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize—
What female heart can gold despise ?
What Cat's averse to Fish ?

Presumptuous maid ! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between—
Malignant Fate sat by and smiled—
The slippery verge her feet beguiled ;
She tumbled headlong in !

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mew'd to every watery God
Some speedy aid to send :—
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd,
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard—
A favourite has no friend ! .

From hence, ye Beauties, undeceived,
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold :
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts is lawful prize,
Nor all that glisters, gold !

Thomas Gray

SEPHESTIA'S SONG TO HER CHILD

WEEP not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

Mother's wag, pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy;
When thy father first did see
Such a boy by him and me,
He was glad, I was woe,
Fortune changed made him so,
When he left his pretty boy,
Last his sorrow, first his joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

Streaming tears that never stint,
Like pearl drops from a flint,
Fell by course from his eyes,
That one another's place supplies;
Thus he grieved in every part,
Tears of blood fell from his heart,
When he left his pretty boy
Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

The wanton smiled, father wept,
Mother cried, baby leapt;
More he crow'd, more we cried,
Nature could not sorrow hide:
He must go, he must kiss
Child and mother, baby bless,
For he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

Robert Greene

INTO BATTLE

The naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze ;
And Life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
And a striving evermore for these ;
And he is dead who will not fight,
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth ;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
They stand to him each one a friend ;
They gently speak in the windy weather ;
They guide to valley and ridge's end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, " Brother, brother,
If this be the last song you shall sing,
Sing well, for you may not sing another ;
Brother, sing."

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers ;—
O patient eyes, courageous hearts !

And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only joy of battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings ;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

Julian Grenfell

THE DARKLING THRUSH

I LEANT upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-grey,
And winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled tree-stems scored the sky
Like strings from broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death lament : .

The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice outburst among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited ;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carollings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy, good-night air
Some blessed hope whereof he knew,
And I was unaware.

Thomas Hardy

AT THE WORD "FAREWELL"

SHE looked like a bird from a cloud
On the clammy lawn,
Moving alone, bare-browed,
In the dim of dawn.
The candles alight in the room
For my parting meal
Made all things withoutdoors loom
Strange, ghostly, unreal.

The hour itself was a ghost,
And it seemed to me then
As of chances the chance furthestmost
I should see her again.
I beheld not where all was so fleet
That a Plan of the past
Which had ruled us from birthtime to meet
Was accomplished at last.
No prelude did I there perceive
To a drama at all,
Or foreshadow what fortune might weave
From beginnings so small.
But I rose as if quickened by a spur
I was bound to obey,
And stepped through the casement to her
Still alone in the grey.
“I am leaving you. . . . Farewell!” I said
As I followed her on
By an alley bare boughs overspread :
“I soon must be gone !”
Even then the scale might have been turned
Against love by a feather,
—But crimson one cheek of hers burned
When we came in together.

Thomas Hardy

TO LIZBIE BROWNE

I

DEAR Lizbie Browne,
Where are you now ?
In sun, in rain ?—
Or is your brow
Past joy, past pain,
Dear Lizbie Browne ?

II

Sweet Lizbie Browne,
How you could smile,
How you could sing!—
How archly wile
In glance-giving,
Sweet Lizbie Browne!

III

And, Lizbie Browne,
Who else had hair
Bay-red as yours,
Or flesh so fair
Bred out of doors,
Sweet Lizbie Browne?

IV

When, Lizbie Browne,
You had just begun
To be endeared
By stealth to one,
You disappeared,
My Lizbie Browne!

V

Ay, Lizbie Browne,
So swift your life,
And mine so slow,
You were a wife
Ere I could show
Love, Lizbie Browne.

VI

Still, Lizbie Browne,
You won, they said,
The best of men
When you were wed.
Where went you then,
O Lizbie Browne ?

VII

Dear Lizbie Browne,
I should have thought,
" Girls ripen fast,"
And coaxed and caught
You ere you passed,
Dear Lizbie Browne !

VIII

But, Lizbie Browne,
I let you slip ;
Shaped not a sign ;
Touched never your lip
With lip of mine,
Lost Lizbie Browne !

IX

So, Lizbie Browne,
When on a day
Men speak of me
As not, you'll say,
" And who was he ? "—
Yes, Lizbie Browne !

Thomas Hardy

THE BLINDED BIRD

So zestfully canst thou sing ?
And all this indignity,
With God's consent, on thee !
Blinded ere yet a-wing
By the red-hot needle thou,
I stand and wonder how
So zestfully thou canst sing !

Resenting not such wrong,
Thy grievous pain forgot,
Eternal dark thy lot,
Groping thy whole life long,
After that stab of fire ;
Enjailed in pitiless wire ;
Resenting not such wrong !

Who hath charity ? This bird.
Who suffereth long and is kind,
Is not provoked, though blind
And alive ensepulchred ?
Who hopeth, endureth all things ?
Who thinketh no evil, but sings ?
Who is divine ? This bird.

Thomas Hardy

SHELLEY'S SKYLARK

(The neighbourhood of Leghorn : March, 1887)

SOMEWHERE afield here something lies
In Earth's oblivious eyeless trust
That moved a poet to prophecies—
A pinch of unseen, unguarded dust :

The dust of the lark that Shelley heard,
And made immortal through times to be ;—
Though it only lived like another bird,
And knew not its immortality :

Lived its meek life ; then, one day, fell—
A little ball of feather and bone ;
And how it perished, when piped farewell,
And where it wastes, are alike unknown

Maybe it rests in the loam I view,
Maybe it throbs in a myrtle's green,
Maybe it sleeps in the coming hue
Of a grape on the slope of yon inland scene.

Go find it, faeries, go and find,
That tiny pinch of priceless dust,
And bring a casket silver-lined,
And framed of gold that gems encrust ;

And we will lay it safe therein,
And consecrate it to endless time ;
For it inspired a bard to win
Ecstatic heights in thought and rhyme.

Thomas Hardy

SUMMER SCHEMES

WHEN friendly summer calls again,
Calls again

Her little fifers to these hills,
We'll go—we two—to that arched fane
Of leafage where they prime their bills
Before they start to flood the plain.

With quavers, minims, shakes, and trills.

“—We'll go,” I sing ; but who shall say
What may not chance before that day !

And we shall see the waters spring,
Waters spring
From chinks the scrubby copses crown ;
And we shall trace their oncreeping
To where the cascade tumbles down
And sends the bobbing growths aswing,
And ferns not quite but almost drown.
“ —We shall,” I say ; but who may sing
Of what another moon will bring !

Thomas Hardy

LONDON IN GOLD

Down through the ancient Strand
The Spirit of October, mild and boon
And sauntering, takes his way
This golden end of afternoon,
As though the corn stood yellow in all the land
And the ripe apples dropped to the harvest-moon.

Lo ! the round sun, half down the western slope—
Seen as along an unglazed telescope—
Lingers and lolls, loth to be done with day :
Gifting the long, lean, lanky street
And its abounding confluences of being
With aspects generous and bland :
Making a thousand harnesses to shine
As with new ore from some enchanted mine,
And every horse's coat so full of sheen
He looks new-tailored, and every 'bus feels clean,
And never a hansom but is worth the feeling ;
And every jeweller within the pale
Offers a real Arabian Night for sale ;

And even the roar
Of the strong streams of toil that pause and pour
Eastward and westward sounds suffused—
Seems as it were bemused
And blurred, and like the speech
Of lazy seas upon a lotus-eating beach—
With this enchanted lustrousness,
This mellow magic, that (as a man's caress
Brings back to some faded face beloved before
A heavenly shadow of the grace it wore
Ere the poor eyes were minded to beseech)
Old things transfigures, and you hail and bless
Their looks of long-lapsed loveliness once more ;
Till the sedate and mannered elegance
Of Clement's is all tintured with romance ;
The while the fanciful, formal, finicking charm
Of Bride's, that madrigal in stone,
Glowes flushed and warm
And beauteous with a beauty not its own ;
And the high majesty of Paul's
Uplifts a voice of living light, and calls—
Calls to his millions to behold and see
How goodly this his London Town can be !

For earth and sky and air
Are golden everywhere,
And golden with a gold so suave and fine
The looking on it lifts the heart like wine.
Trafalgar Square
(The fountains volleying golden glaze)
Gleams like an angel-market. High aloft
Over his couchant Lions in a haze
Shimmering and bland and soft,
A dust of chrysoprase,
Our Sailor takes the golden gaze

Of the saluting sun, and flame's superb,
As once he flamed it on his ocean round.
The dingy dreariness of the picture-place,
Turned very nearly bright,
Takes on a certain dismal grace,
And shows not all a scandal to the ground.
The very blind man pottering on the kerb,
Among the posies and the ostrich feathers
And the rude voices touched with all the weathers
Of all the varying year,
Shares in the universal alms of light.
The windows, with their fleeting, flickering fires,
The height and spread of frontage shining sheer,
The glittering signs, the rejoicing roofs and spires—
'Tis El Dorado—El Dorado plain,
The Golden City! And when a girl goes by,
Look! as she turns her glancing head,
A call of gold is floated from her ear!
Golden, all golden! In a golden glory,
Long lapsing down a golden coasted sky,
The day not dies but seems
Dispersed in wafts and drifts of gold, and shed
Upon a past of golden song and story
And memories of gold and golden dreams.

W. E. Henley

THE FULL SEA ROLLS

THE full sea rolls and thunders
In glory and in glee.
O bury me not in the senseless earth,
But in the living sea!

Ay, bury me where it surges
A thousand miles from shore,
And in its brotherly unrest
I'll range for evermore.

W. E. Henley

VIXI

WHAT is to come we know not. But we know
That what has been was good—was good to show,
Better to hide, and best of all to bear.
We are the masters of the days that were.
We have lived, we have loved, we have suffered . . .
even so.

Shall we not take the ebb who had the flow ?
Life was our friend. Now, if it be our foe—
Dear, though it spoil and break us !—need we care
What is to come ?

Let the great winds their worst and wildest blow,
Or the gold weather round us mellow slow ;
We have fulfilled ourselves, and we can dare
And we can conquer, though we may not share
In the rich quiet of the afterglow
What is to come.

W. E. Henley

WHEN YOU ARE OLD

WHEN you are old, and I am passed away—
Passed, and your face, your golden face, is gray—
I think, whate'er the end, this dream of mine,
Comforting you, a friendly star will shine
Down the dim slope where still you stumble and
stray.

So may it be : that so dead Yesterday,
No sad-eyed ghost but generous and gay,
May serve you memories like almighty wine,
When you are old.

Dear Heart, it shall be so. Under the sway
Of death the past's enormous disarray
Lies hushed and dark. Yet though there come no
sign,
Live on well pleased : immortal and divine
Love shall still tend you, as God's angels may,
When you are old.

W. E. Henley

THE END IS THE BEST OF ALL

CROSSES and troubles a-many have proved me
One or two women (God bless them !) have loved me.
I have worked and dreamed, and I've talked at will
Of art and drink I have had my fill.
I've comforted here, and I've succoured there.
I've faced my foes, and I've backed my friends.
I've blundered, and sometimes made amends.
I have prayed for light, and I've known despair.
Now I look before, as I look behind,
Come storm, come shine, whatever befall,
With a grateful heart and a constant mind,
For the end I know is the best of all.

W. E. Henley

VIRTUE

SWEET day, so cool, so calm, so bright.
The bridal of the earth and sky ;
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night ;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye :
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie ;
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives ;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

George Herbert

THE PULLEY

WHEN God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by,—
Let us (said He) pour on him all we can ;
Let the world's riches which dispersed lie
Contract into a span. •

So strength first made a way ;
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all his treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature :
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness ;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to My breast.
George Herbert

THE COLLAR

I STRUCK the board and cried, No more ;
I will abroad.
What, shall I ever sigh and pine ?
My lines and life are free, free as the road,
Loose as the wind, as large as store.
Shall I be still in suit ?
Have I no harvest but a thorn
To let me bleed, and not restore
What I have lost with cordial fruit ?
Sure there was wine
Before my sighs did dry it ; there was corn
Before my tears did drown it.
Is the year only lost to me ?
Have I no bays to crown it ?
No flowers, no garlands gay ? All blasted ?
All wasted ?
Not so, my heart ; but there is fruit,
And thou hast hands.

GEORGE HERBERT

Recover all thy sigh-blown age
 On double pleasure : leave thy cold dispute
 Of what is fit and not ; forsake thy cage,
 Thy rope of sands
 Which petty thoughts have made, and made to thee
 Good cable to enforce and draw
 And be thy law,
 While thou dost wink and would'st not see.
 Away : take heed,
 I will abroad
 Call in thy death's-head there : tie up thy fears.
 He that forbears
 To suit and serve his need
 Deserves his load.
 But as I raved and grew more fierce and wild
 At every word,
 Methought I heard one calling "*Child !*"
 And I replied "*My Lord.*"

George Herbert

VERSES FROM THE EASTER HYMN

I got me flowers to straw Thy way,
 I got me boughs off many a tree ;
 But Thou wast up by break of day,
 And brought'st Thy sweets along with Thee.
 The sun arising in the East,
 Though he give light, and the East perfume,
 If they should offer to contest
 With Thy arising, they presume.
 Can there be any day but this,
 Though many suns to shine endeavour ?
 We count three hundred, but we miss :
 There is but one, and that one ever.

George Herbert

LOVE

Love bade me welcome ; yet my soul drew back,
 Guilty of dust and sin,
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
 From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
 If I lacked anything.

“ A guest,” I answered, “ worthy to be here ” :
 Love said, “ You shall be he.”

“ I, the unkind, ungrateful ? Ah, my dear,
 I cannot look on Thee.”

Love took my hand and smiling did reply,
 “ Who made the eyes but I ? ”

“ Truth, Lord ; but I have marred them : let my
 shame

 Go where it doth deserve.”

“ And know you not,” says Love, “ Who bore the
 blame ? ”

 “ My dear, then I will serve.”

“ You must sit down,” says Love, “ and taste my
 meat.”

 So I did sit and eat.

George Herbert

EMPLOYMENT

He that is weary, let him sit.
 My soul would stir
And trade in courtesies and wit,
 Quitting the fur
To cold complexions needing it,

Man is no star, but a quick coal
 Of mortal fire :
Who blows it not, nor doth control
 A faint desire,
Lets his own ashes choke his soul.

When th' elements did for place contest
 With him, whose will
Ordained the highest to be best ;
 The earth sat still,
And by the others is oppress.

Life is a business, not good cheer ;
 Ever in wars.
The sun still shineth there or here,
 Whereas the stars
Watch an advantage to appear.

Oh, that I were an orange-tree,
 That busy plant !
Then should I ever laden be,
 And never want
Some fruit for him that dressed me.

But we are still too young or old ;
 The man is gone,
Before we do our wares unfold :
 So we freeze on,
Until the grave increase our cold.

George Herbert

ELEGY

MUST I then see, alas, eternal night
Sitting upon those fairest eyes,
And closing all those beams, which once did rise
So radiant and bright,
That light and heat in them to us did prove
Knowledge and love ?

Or if you did delight no more to stay
Upon this low and earthly stage,
But rather chose an endless heritage,
Tell us at least, we pray,
Where all the beauties that those ashes owed
Are now bestowed ?

Doth the sun now his light with yours renew ?
Have waves the curling of your hair ?
Did you restore unto the sky and air
The red and white and blue ?
Have you vouchsafed to flowers since your death
That sweetest breath ?

Lord Herbert of Cherbury

TO DAFFODILS

FAIR daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon :
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the evensong,
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

ROBERT HERRICK

We have short time to stay as you,
 We have as short a spring,
 As quick a growth to meet decay,
 As you, or anything.

We die,
 As your hours do, and dry
 Away,
 Like to the summer's rain,
 Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
 Ne'er to be found again.

Robert Herrick

THE NIGHT PIECE : TO JULIA

HER eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
 The shooting stars attend thee.
 And the elves also,
 Whose little eyes glow
 Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee !
 No Will-o'-th'-Wisp mislight thee,
 Nor snake nor slow-worm bite thee ;
 But on, on thy way
 Not making a stay,
 Since ghost there's none to affright thee !
 Let not the dark thee cumber :
 What though the moon does slumber ?
 The stars of the night
 Will lend thee their light,
 Like tapers clear without number.
 Then, Julia, let me woo thee,
 Thus, thus to come unto me !
 And when I shall meet
 Thy silv'ry feet,
 My soul I'll pour into thee.

Robert Herrick

UPON JULIA'S CLOTHES

WHENAS in silks my Julia goes,
Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
That liquefaction of her clothes.

Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
That brave vibration each way free ;
O how that glittering taketh me !

Robert Herrick

DELIGHT IN DISORDER

A SWEET disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness ;
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction ;
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthrals the crimson stomacher ;
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbons to flow confusedly ;
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat ;
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility ;—
Do more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part.

Robert Herrick

TO BLOSSOMS

FAIR pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast ?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here awhile
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What, were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night ?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave :
And after they have shown their pride,
Like you, awhile, they glide
Into the grave.

Robert Herrick

GRACE FOR A CHILD

HERE, a little child, I stand
Heaving up my either hand ;
Cold as paddocks though they be,
Here I lift them up to Thee,
For a benison to fall
On our meat and on us all. Amen.

Robert Herrick

LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

IN the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When I lie within my bed,
Sick in heart and sick in head,
And with doubts discomfited,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the house doth sigh and weep,
And the world is drown'd in sleep,
Yet mine eyes the watch do keep,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the artless doctor sees
No one hope, but of his fees,
And his skill runs on the lees,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the passing bell doth toll,
And the furies in a shoal
Come to fright a parting soul,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the tapers now burn blue,
And the comforters are few,
And that number more than true,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the priest his last hath pray'd,
And I nod to what is said,
'Cause my speech is now decay'd,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When, God knows, I'm toss'd about
Either with despair or doubt ;
Yet, before the glass be out,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the tempter me pursu'th
With the sins of all my youth,
And half damns me with untruth,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the flames and hellish cries
Fright mine ears and fright mine eyes,
And all terrors me surprise,

Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the judgment is reveal'd,
And that open'd which was seal'd,
When to Thee I have appeal'd,

Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

Robert Herrick

PACK, CLOUDS, AWAY !

PACK, clouds, away, and welcome, day !
With night we banish sorrow.

Sweet air, blow soft ; mount, lark, aloft
To give my love good morrow !

Wings from the wind to please her mind,
Notes from the lark I'll borrow :

Bird, prune thy wing, nightingale, sing,
To give my love good morrow !

To give my love good morrow,
Notes from them all I'll borrow.

Wake from thy nest, robin redbreast !

Sing, birds, in every furrow,

And from each bill let music shrill

Give my fair love good morrow !

Blackbird and thrush in every bush,

Stare, linnet, and cocksparrow,

You pretty elves, amongst yourselves

Sing my fair love good morrow !

To give my love good morrow,

Sing, birds, in every furrow !

Thomas Heywood

THE DEATH-BED

WE watched her breathing thro' the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

Thomas Hood

THE PORTRAIT

SHE sits upon a tombstone in the shade ;
One flake of sunlight, falling thro' the veils
Of quivering poplars, lights upon her hair,
Shot golden, and across her candid brow.
Thus in the pleasant gloom she holds the eye,
Being life amid piled up remembrances
Of the tranquil dead.

One hand, dropped lightly down,
Rests on the words of a forgotten name :
Therefore the past makes glad to stay her up.

Walled in, walled off : here's an oblivious place,
Planted in with trees, unvisited :
Still backwater in the tide of life.
Life flows all round ; sounds from surrounding
streets,

Laughter of unseen children, roll of wheels,
Cries of all vendors.—So she sits and waits.
And she rejoices us who pass her by,
And she rejoices those who here lie still,
And she makes glad the little wandering airs,
And doth make glad the shaken beams of light
That fall upon her forehead : all the world
Moves round her, sitting on forgotten tombs
And lighting in to-morrow. She is Life :
That makes us keep on moving, taking roads,
Hauling great burdens up the unending hills,
Pondering senseless problems, setting sail
For undiscovered anchorages. Here
She waits, she waits, sequestered among tombs,
The sunlight on her hair. She waits, she waits :
The secret music, the resolving note
That sets in tune all this discordant world
And solves the riddles of the Universe.

Ford Madox Hueffer

ON A LOCK OF MILTON'S HAIR

It lies before me there, and my own breath
Stirs its thin outer threads, as though beside
The living head I stood in honoured pride,
Talking of lovely things that conquer death.
Perhaps he pressed it once, or underneath
Ran his fine fingers, when he leant, blank-eyed,
And saw, in fancy, Adam and his bride

With their heaped locks, or his own Delphic wreath.
There seems a love in hair, though it be dead.
It is the gentlest, yet the strongest thread
Of our frail plant,—a blossom from the tree
Surviving the proud trunk ;—as though it said
Patience and Gentleness is Power. In me
Behold affectionate eternity.

Leigh Hunt

BY THE STATUE OF KING CHARLES AT
CHARING CROSS
(TO WILLIAM WATSON)

SOMBRE and rich, the skies ;
Great glooms, and starry plains.
Gently the night wind sighs ;
Else a vast silence reigns.

The splendid silence clings
Around me : and around
The saddest of all kings
Crowned, and again discrowned.

Comely and calm, he rides
Hard by his own Whitehall :
Only the night wind glides :
No crowds, nor rebels, brawl.

Gone, too, his Court : and yet,
The stars his courtiers are :
Stars in their stations set ;
And every wandering star.

Alone he rides, alone,
The fair and fatal king :
Dark night is all his own,
That strange and solemn thing.

Which are more full of fate :
The stars ; or those sad eyes ?
Which are more still and great :
Those brows ; or the dark skies ?

Although his whole heart yearn
In passionate tragedy :
Never was face so stern
With sweet austerity.

Vanquished in life, his death
By beauty made amends :
The passing of his breath
Won his defeated ends.

Brief life, and hapless ? Nay :
Through death, life grew sublime.
Speak after sentence ? Yea :
And to the end of time.

Armoured he rides, his head
Bare to the stars of doom :
He triumphs now, the dead,
Beholding London's gloom.

Our wearier spirit faints,
Vexed in the world's employ :
His soul was of the saints ;
And art to him was joy.

King, tried in fires of woe !
Men hunger for thy grace :
And through the night I go,
Loving thy mournful face.

Yet, when the city sleeps ;
When all the cries are still :
The stars and heavenly deeps
Work out a perfect will.

Lionel Johnson

LOVERS' LORE

THE sea hath many thousand sands,
The sun hath motes as many ;
The sky is full of stars, and Love
As full of woes as any :
Believe me, that do know the elf,
And make no trial by thyself !

It is in truth a pretty toy
For babes to play withal ;
But O ! the honeys of our youth
Are oft our age's gall !
Self-proof in time will make thee know
He was a prophet told thee so :

A prophet that, Cassandra-like,
Tells truth without belief ;
For headstrong Youth will run his race,
Although his goal be grief :—
Love's martyr, when his heat is past,
Proves Care's confessor at the last.

Robert Jones

SIMPLICITY

STILL to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast ;
Still to be powder'd, still perfumed :

Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace ;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free :
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all th' adulteries of art ;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

Ben Jonson

EPITAPH ON THE COUNTESS DOWAGER
OF PEMBROKE

UNDERNEATH this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse,
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother :
Death, ere thou hast slain another
Learn'd and fair and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

Ben Jonson

TO CELIA

DRINK to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine ;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise,
Doth ask a drink divine ;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee,
As giving it a hope, that there
It could not withered be.
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me ;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee.

Ben Jonson

IT IS NOT GROWING LIKE A TREE

It is not growing like a tree,
In bulk, doth make men better be ;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald and sere :
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night ;
It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions we just beauties see ;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

Ben Jonson

TO DIANA

QUEEN and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep :
 Hesperus entreats thy light,
 Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose !
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close :
 Bless us then with wished sight,
 Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal shining quiver :
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever ;
 Thou that mak'st a day of night,
 Goddess excellently bright.

Ben Jonson

GLORY AND LOVELINESS HAVE PASSED
AWAY

(To LEIGH HUNT)

GLORY and loveliness have passed away
For if we wander out in early morn,
 No wreathed incense do we see upborne
Into the east, to meet the smiling day :
No crowd of nymphs soft voic'd and young, and gay,

In woven baskets bringing ears of corn,
Roses, and pinks, and violets, to adorn
The shrine of Flora in her early May.
But there are left delights as high as these,
And I shall ever bless my destiny,
That in a time, when under pleasant trees
Pan is no longer sought, I feel a free
A leafy luxury, seeing I could please
With these poor offerings, a man like thee.

John Keats

HAPPY IS ENGLAND

HAPPY is England! I could be content
To see no other verdure than its own ;
To feel no other breezes than are blown
Through its tall woods with high romances blent :
Yet do I sometimes feel a languishment
For skies Italian, and an inward groan
To sit upon an Alp as on a throne,
And half forget what world or worldling meant.
Happy is England, sweet her artless daughters ;
Enough their simple loveliness for me,
Enough their whitest arms in silence clinging :
Yet do I often warmly burn to see
Beauties of deeper glance, and hear their singing,
And float with them about the summer waters.

John Keats

TO HOMER

STANDING aloof in giant ignorance,
Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,
As one who sits ashore and longs perchance
To visit dolphin-coral in deep seas.

So thou wast blind !—but then the veil was rent
For Jove uncurtain'd Heaven to let thee live
And Neptune made for thee a spermy tent,
And Pan made sing for thee his forest-hive ;
Aye, on the shores of darkness there is light,
And precipices show untrodden green ;
There is a budding morrow in midnight,—
There is a triple sight in blindness keen ;
Such seeing hadst thou, as it once befel
To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven, and Hell.

John Keats

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S
HOMER

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken ;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

John Keats

FANCY

EVER let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home :
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth ;
Then let winged Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her,
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy ! let her loose ;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming ;
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting : What do then ?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The scar faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night ;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the caked snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon ;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overaw'd,
Fancy, high-commission'd :—send her !
She has vassals to attend her :
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost ;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather ;

All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray ;
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,
With a still, mysterious stealth :
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it :—thou shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear ;
Rustle of the reaped corn ;
Sweet birds antheming the morn :
And, in the same moment—hark !
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold ;
White-plumed lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst ;
Shaded hyacinth, always
Sapphire queen of the mid-May ;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearled with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its celled sleep ;
And the snake all winter-thin
Cast on sunny bank its skin ;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest ;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm ;
Acorns ripe down-pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy ! let her loose ;
Everything is spoilt by use :
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,
Too much gazed at ? Where's the maid
Whose lip mature is ever new ?
Where's the eye, however blue,
Doth not weary ? Where's the face
One would meet in every place ?
Where's the voice, however soft,
One would hear so very oft ?
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.
Let then winged Fancy find
'Thee a mistress to thy mind :
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,
Ere the God of Torment taught her
How to frown and how to chide ;
With a waist and with a side
White as Hebe's, when her zone
Slipt its golden clasp, and down
Fell her kirtle to her feet,
While she held the goblet sweet,
And Jove grew languid.—Break the mesh
Of the Fancy's silken leash ;
Quickly break her prison-string,
And such joys as these she'll bring.
—Let the winged Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home.

John Keats

IN A DREAR-NIGHTED DECEMBER

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity :
The north cannot undo them
With a sleety whistle through them,
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy brook,
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look ;
But with a sweet forgetting
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting
About the frozen time.

Ah ! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy !
But were there ever any
Writh'd not at passéd joy ?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it
Nor numbéd sense to steal it,
Was never said in rhyme.

John Keats

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

“O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering ?
The sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

“O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms !
So haggard and so woe-begone ?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

“I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

“I met a lady in the meads
Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

“I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone ;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

“I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

“She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said
'I love thee true.'

“ She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sigh’d full sore ;
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

“ And there we slumbered on the moss,
And there I dream’d—Ah ! woe betide !
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hillside.

“ I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all :
Who cried—‘ La belle Dame sans Merci
Thee hath in thrall ! ’

“ I stw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hillside.

“ And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither’d from the lake,
And no birds sing.”

John Keats

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

THOU still unravish’d bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme :
What leaf-fring’d legend haunts about thy shape

Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady ?
What men or gods are these ? What maidens loth ?
What mad pursuit ? What struggle to escape ?
What pipes and timbrels ? What wild ecstasy ?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter ; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on ;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone :
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare ;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve ;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair !

Ah, happy, happy boughs ! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu ;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new ;
More happy love ! more happy, happy love !
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young ;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice ?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest ?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,

Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn ?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be ; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape ! Fair attitude ! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed ;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity : Cold Pastoral !

When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

John Keats

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage, that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth !

O, for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth,
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim :

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and
dies ;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :
Already with thee ! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays ;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy
ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows

The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild :
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;
 Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves ;
 And mid-May's eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves

Darkling I listen ; and, for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme
 To take into the air my quiet breath ;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy !
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !
 No hungry generations tread thee down ;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown :
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for
 home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in fœry lands forlorn.

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self !
 Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
 Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades

Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades :
Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?
Fled is that music :—do I wake or sleep ?

John Keats

BRIGHT STAR

BRIGHT STAR ! would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of p'rr'e ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors :
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair Love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest ;
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever,—or else swoon to death.

John Keats

EXEQUY ON HIS WIFE

ACCEPT, thou shrine of my dead saint,
Instead of dirges this complaint ;
And for sweet flowers to crown thy herse
Receive a strew of weeping verse
From thy grieved friend, whom thou might'st see
Quite melted into tears for thee.

Dear loss ! since thy untimely fate,
My task hath been to meditate
On thee, on thee ! Thou art the book,
The library whereon I look,
Tho' almost blind. For thee, loved clay,
I languish out, not live, the day . . .
Thou hast benighted me ; thy set
This eve of blackness did beget,
Who wast my day (tho' overcast
Before thou hadst thy noontide past) :
And I remember must in tears
Thou scarce hadst seen so many years
As day tells hours. By thy clear sun
My love and fortune first did run ;
But thou wilt never more appear
Folded within my hemisphere,
Since both thy light and motive ^{so}
Like a fled star, is fall'n and ^{there},
And 'twixt me and my soul's dear wish
The earth now interposèd is . . .

I could allow thee for a time
To darken me and my sad clime ;
Were it a month, a year, or ten,
I would thy exile live till then,
And all that space my mirth adjourn—
So thou would'st promise to return,
And putting off thy ashy shroud
At length disperse this sorrow's cloud.

But woe is me ! the longest date
Too narrow is to calculate
These empty hopes : never shall I
Be so much blest as to descry
A glimpse of thee, till that day come
Which shall the earth to cinders doom,

And a fierce fever must calcine
The body of this world—like thine,
My little world ! That fit of fire
Once off, our bodies shall aspire
To our souls' bliss : then we shall rise
And view ourselves with clearer eyes
In that calm region where no night
Can hide us from each other's sight.

Meantime thou hast her, earth : much good
May my harm do thee ! Since it stood
With Heaven's will I might not call
Her longer mine, I give thee all
My short-lived right and interest
In her whom living I loved best.
Be kind to her, and prithee look
Thou write into thy Doomsday book
Each parcel of this rarity
Which in thy casket shrined doth lie,
As thou wilt answer Him that lent—
Not gave—thee my dear monument.
So close the ground, and 'bout her shade
Black curtains draw : my bride is laid.

Sleep on, my Love, in thy cold bed
Never to be disquieted !
My last good-night ! Thou wilt not wake
Till I thy fate shall overtake :
Till age, or grief, or sickness must
Marry my body to that dust
It so much loves ; and fill the room
My heart keeps empty in thy tomb.
Stay for me there : I will not fail
To meet thee in that hollow vale.
And think not much of my delay :
I am already on the way,

And follow thee with all the speed
Desire can make, or sorrows breed.
Each minute is a short degree
And every hour a step towards thee. . . .

'Tis true—with shame and grief I yield—
Thou, like the van, first took'st the field ;
And gotten hast the victory
In thus adventuring to die
Before me, whose more years might crave
A just precedence in the grave.
But hark ! my pulse, like a soft drum,
Beats my approach, tells thee I come ;
And slow howe'er my marches be
I shall at last sit down by thee.

The thought of this bids me go on
And wait my dissolution
With hope and comfort. Dear—forgive
The crime—I am content to live
Divided, with but half a heart,
Till we shall meet and never part.

Henry King

SIC VITA

LIKE to the falling of a star,
Or as the flights of eagles are,—
Or like the fresh spring's gaudy hue,
Or silver drops of morning dew ;
Or like a wind that chafes the flood,
Or bubbles which on water stood :
Even such is man, whose borrowed light
Is straight called in, and paid to night.
The wind blows out, the bubble dies ;
The spring entombed in autumn lies ;
The dew dries up, the star is shot ;
The flight is past—and man forgot.

Henry King

YOUNG AND OLD

WHEN all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green ;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen ;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away ;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown ;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down ;
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among :
God grant you find one face there,
You loved when all was young.

Charles Kingsley

THE SANDS OF DEE

“ O MARY, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee ” ;
The western wind was wild and dank with foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land :
And never home came she.

“ Oh ! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress of golden hair,
A drownéd maiden's hair
Above the nets at sea ?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee.”

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea :
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee.

Charles Kingsley

FRET NOT

FAR among the lonely hills,
As I lay beside my sheep,
Rest came down upon my soul,
From the everlasting deep.
Changeless march the stars above,
Changeless morn succeeds to even ;
And the everlasting hills
Changeless watch the changeless heaven.
See the rivers, how they run,
Changeless to the changeless sea ;
All around is forethought sure,
Fixèd will and stern decree.
Can the sailor move the main ?
Will the potter heed the clay ?
Mortal ! where the Spirit drives,
Thither must the wheels obey.

Neither ask, nor fret, nor strive ;
Where thy path is, thou shalt go.
He who made the streams of time
Wafts thee down to weal or woe.

Charles Kingsley

THE LAST CHANTEY

Thus said The Lord in the Vault above the Cherubim,
Calling to the Angels and the Souls in their degree :

“ Lo ! Earth has passed away

On the smoke of Judgment Day.

That Our word may be established shall We
gather up the sea ? ”

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners :

“ Plague upon the hurricane that made us furl
and flee !

But the war is done between us,

In the deep the Lord hath seen us—

Our bones we'll leave the barracout', and God
may sink the sea ! ”

Then said the soul of Judas that betrayéd Him :

“ Lord, hast Thou forgotten Thy covenant with
me ?

How once a year I go

To cool me on the flow ?

And Ye take my day of mercy if Ye take away
the sea ! ”

Then said the soul of the Angel of the Off-shore
Wind :

(He that bits the thunder when the bull-mouthed
breakers flee) :

“ I have watch and ward to keep
O'er Thy wonders on the deep,
And Ye take mine honour from me if Ye take
away the sea ! ”

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners :
“ Nay, but we were angry, and a hasty folk are
we !

If we worked the ship together
Till she foundered in foul weather,
Are we babes that we should clamour for a
vengeance on the sea ? ”

Then said the souls of the slaves that men threw
overboard :

“ Kennelled in the picaroon a weary band were we ;
But Thy arm was strong to save,
And it touched us on the wave,
And we drowsed the long tides idle till Thy
Trumpets tore the sea.”

Then cried the soul of the stout Apostle Paul to God :
“ Once we frapped a ship, and she laboured
woundily.

There were fourteen score of these,
And they blessed Thee on their knees,
When they learned Thy Grace and Glory under
Malta by the sea ! ”

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners,
Plucking at their harps, and they plucked un-
handily :

“ Our thumbs are rough and tarred,
And the tune is something hard—
May we lift a Deepsea Chantey such as seamen
use at sea ? ”

Then said the souls of the gentlemen-adventurers—
Fettered wrist to bar all for red iniquity :

“ Ho, we revel in our chains
O'er the sorrow that was Spain's ;
Heave or sink it, leave or drink it, we were
masters of the sea ! ”

Up spake the soul of a gray Gothavn 'speckshioner—
(He that led the flinching in the fleets of fair
Dundee) :

“ Oh, the ice-blink white and near,
And the bowhead breaking clear !
Will Ye whelm them all for wantonness that
wallow in the sea ? ”

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners,
Crying : “ Under Heaven, here is neither lead
nor lee !

Must we sing for evermore
On the windless, glassy floor ?
Take back your golden fiddles and we'll beat to
open sea ! ”

Then stooped the Lord, and He called the good sea
up to Him,
And 'stablished his borders unto all eternity,
That such as have no pleasure
For to praise the Lord by measure,
They may enter into galleons and serve Him
on the sea.

*Sun, wind, and cloud shall fail not from the face
of it,
Stinging, ringing spindrift, nor the fulmar flying
frec ;*

*And the ships shall go abroad
To the Glory of the Lord
Who heard the silly sailor-folk and gave them back
their sea !*

Rudyard Kipling

L'ENVOI

WHEN Earth's last picture is painted and the tubes
are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colours have faded, and the
youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—lie down
for an æon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall put
us to work anew !

And those that were good shall be happy : they
shall sit in a golden chair ;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with
brushes of comets' hair ;
They shall find real saints to draw from—Magdalene,
Peter, and Paul ;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never
be tired at all !

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the
Master shall blame ;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall
work for fame,
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in
his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of
Things as They Are !

Rudyard Kipling

RECESSIONAL

GOD of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

The tumult and the shouting dies ;
The captains and the kings depart :
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

Far-called, our navies melt away ;
On dune and headland sinks the fire :
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre !
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust
And, guarding, calls not Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word—
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord ! Amen.

Rudyard Kipling

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

WHERE are they gone, the old familiar faces?
I had a mother, but she died, and left me,
Died prematurely in a day of horrors—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school days;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a Love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man:
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seem'd a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces,

How some they have died, and some they have
left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

Charles Lamb

CHILD'S PLAY

A CHILD'S a plaything for an hour ;

Its pretty tricks we try

For that or for a longer space,—

Then tire, and lay it by.

But I knew one that to itself

All seasons could control ;

That would have mock'd the sense of pain

Out of a grieved soul.

Thou straggler into loving arms,

Young climber up of knees,

When I forget thy thousand ways

Then life and all shall cease !

Mary Lamb

ROSE AYLMER

AH, what avails the sceptred race,

Ah, what the form divine !

What every virtue, every grace !

Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes

May weep, but never see,

A night of memories and of sighs

I consecrate to thee.

Walter Savage Landor

IANTHIE

From you, Ianthie, little troubles pass

Like little ripples down a sunny river ;

Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,

Cut down, and up again as blithe as ever.

Walter Savage Landor

I STROVE WITH NONE

I STROVE with none ; for none was worth my strife.
Nature I loved and, next to Nature, Art ;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life ;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

Walter Savage Landor

GIORNO DEI MORTI

ALONG the avenue of cypresses,
All in their scarlet cloaks, and surplices
Of linen, go the chaunting choristers,
The priests in gold and black, the villagers . . .

And all along the path to the cemetery,
The round dark heads of men crowd silently
And black-scarved faces of women-folk wistfully
Watch at the banner of death, and the mystery.

And at the foot of a grave a father stands
With sunken head and forgotten, folded hands ;
And at the foot of a grave a mother kneels
With pale shut face, nor either hears nor feels

The coming of the chaunting choristers
Between the avenue of cypresses,
The silence of the many villagers,
The candle-flames beside the surplices.

D. H. Lawrence

AULD ROBIN GRAY

WHEN the sheep are in the fauld, and the kye at
hame,

And a' the warld to rest are gane,
The waes o' my heart fa' in showers frae my e'e,
While my gudeman lies sound by me.

Young Jamie lo'cd me weel, and sought me for his
bride,

But saving a croun he had naething else beside :
To make the croun a pund, young Jamie gaed to
sea,

And the croun and the pund were baith for me.

He hadna been awa a week but only twa,
When my father brak his arm and the cow was
stoun awa ;

My mother she fell sick, and my Jamie at the sea—
And auld Robin Gray came a-courtin' me.

My father couldna work, and my mother couldna
spin ;

I toil'd day and night, but their bread I couldna
win ;

Auld Rob maintained them baith, and wi' tears in
his e'e

Said :—" Jennie, for their sakes, O, marry me ! "

My heart it said nay ; I look'd for Jamie back ;
But the wind it blew high, and the ship it was a
wrack ;

His ship it was a wrack . . . Why didna Jamie dee ?
Or why do I live to cry Wae's me ?

My father urgit sair : my mother didna speak,
But she look'd in my face till my heart was like
to break ;
They gi'ed him my hand, but my heart was at the
sea,
Sae auld Robin Gray he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been a wife a week but only four,
When, mournfu' as I sat on the stane at the door,
I saw my Jamie's wraith, for I couldna think it
he—

Till he said :—" I'm come hame to marry thee."

O, sair, sair did we greet, and muckle did we say ;
We took but ae kiss, and I bad him gang away ;
I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee,
And why was I born to say Wae's me !

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin ;
I daurna think on Jamie, for that wad be a sin ;
But I'll do my best a gude wife ay to be,
For auld Robin Gray, he is kind unto me.

Lady Anne Lindsay

TO THE CUCKOO

HAIL, beauteous stranger of the grove !
Thou messenger of Spring !
Now Heaven repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome ring.

What time the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear :
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year ?

Delightful visitant ! with thee
I hail the time of flowers,
And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bowers.

The schoolboy, wand'ring through the wood
To pull the primrose gay,
Starts, the new voice of Spring is here,
And imitates thy lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom,
Thou fli'st thy vocal vale,
An annual guest in other lands,
Another Spring to hail.

Sweet bird ! thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear ;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No Winter in thy year !

O could I fly, I'd fly with thee !
We'd make, with joyful wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Companions of the Spring.

John Logan

TO ALTHEA FROM PRISON

WHEN Love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates ;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fettered to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames ;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free—
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty
And glories of my King ;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlargèd winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage ;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage :
If I have freedom in my love
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

Richard Lovelace

TO LUCASTA GOING TO THE WARS

TELL me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I flie.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field,
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you, too, shall adore :
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.

Richard Lovelace

CUPID AND MY CAMPASPE

CUPID and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses—Cupid paid :
He stakes his quiver, bow, and arrows,
His mother's doves, and team of sparrows ;
Loses them too ; then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on 's cheek (but none knows how) ;
With these, the crystal of his brow
And then the dimple of his chin
All these did my Campaspe win.
At last he set her both his eyes—
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love ! has she done this to thee
What shall, alas ! become of me ?

John Lyly

DARK ROSALEEN

O my Dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep !
The priests are on the ocean green,
They march along the deep.

There's wine from the royal Pope
Upon the ocean green ;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My own Rosaleen !
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,
My Dark Rosaleen !

Over hills, and through dales,
Have I roamed for your sake ;
All yesterday I sailed with sails
On river and on lake.
The Erne, at its highest flood,
I dashed across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My own Rosaleen !
Oh, there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lightened through my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen !

All day long, in unrest,
To and fro, do I move.
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love !
The heart in my bosom faints
To think of you, my Queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My own Rosaleen !
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My Dark Rosaleen !

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon.
But yet will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen ;
'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My own Rosaleen !
'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
My Dark Rosaleen !

Over dew, over sand,
Will I fly, for your weal :
Your holy delicate white hands
Shall girdle me with steel.
At home, in your emerald bowers,
From morning's dawn till e'en,
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My fond Rosaleen !
You'll think of me through daylight hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My Dark Rosaleen !

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
Oh, I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills !
And one beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My fond Rosaleen !

Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
My Dark Rosaleen !

Oh, the Erne shall run red,
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
And flames wrap hill and wood,
And gun-peal and slogan-cry
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My own Rosaleen !
The Judgement Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My Dark Rosaleen !

J. C. Mangan

COME LIVE WITH ME

COME live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
Woods or steepy mountains yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies ;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle ;

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull ;
Fair-lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold ;

A belt of straw and ivy buds
With coral clasps and amber studs :
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my love !

Thy silver dishes, for thy meat
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall on an ivory table be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning.
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

Christopher Marlowe

THE GIRL DESCRIBES HER FAWN

WITH sweetest milk and sugar first
I it at my own fingers nursed ;
And as it grew, so every day
It wax'd more white and sweet than they—
It had so sweet a breath ! and oft
I blush'd to see its foot more soft
And white,—shall I say,—than my hand ?
Nay, any lady's of the land !

It is a wondrous thing how fleet
'Twas on those little silver feet :
With what a pretty skipping grace
It oft would challenge me the race :—
And when't had left me far away
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay :

For it was nimbler much than hinds,
And trod as if on the four winds.

I have a garden of my own,
But so with roses overgrown
And lilies, that you would it guess
To be a little wilderness :
And all the spring-time of the year
It only lovéd to be there.
Among the beds of lilies I
Have sought it oft, where it should lie ;
Yet could not, till itself would rise,
Find it, although before mine eyes :—
For in the flaxen lilies' shade
It like a bank of lilies laid.

Upon the roses it would feed,
Until its lips e'en seem'd to bleed :
And then to me 'twould boldly trip,
And print those roses on my lip.
But all its chief delight was still
On roses thus itself to fill,
And its pure virgin limbs to fold
In whitest sheets of lilies cold :—
Had it lived long, it would have been
Lilies without—roses within.

Andrew Marvell

BERMUDAS

WHERE the remote Bermudas ride
In the ocean's bosom unespied,
From a small boat that row'd along
The listening winds received this song.
“ What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze

Where He the huge sea-monsters wracks,
That lift the deep upon their backs,
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own ?
He lands us on a grassy stage,
Safe from the storms, and prelate's rage :
He gave us this eternal Spring
Which here enamels everything,
And sends the fowls to us in care
On daily visits through the air.
He hangs in shades the orange bright
Like golden lamps in a green night,
And does in the pomegranates close
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows :
He makes the figs our mouths to meet
And throws the melons at our feet ;
But apples plants of such a price,
No tree could ever bear them twice.
With cedars chosen by His hand
From Lebanon He stores the land ;
And makes the hollow seas that roar
Proclaim the ambergris on shore.
He cast (of which we rather boast)
The Gospel's pearl upon our coast ;
And in these rocks for us did frame
A temple where to sound His name.
Oh ! let our voice His praise exalt
Till it arrive at Heaven's vault,
Which thence (perhaps) rebounding may
Echo beyond the Mexique bay ! ”
—Thus sung they in the English boat
An holy and a cheerful note :
And all the way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time.

Andrew Marvell

AN HORATIAN ODE UPON CROMWELL'S
RETURN FROM IRELAND

THE forward youth that would appear
Must now forsake his Muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing :

'Tis time to leave the books in dust,
And oil the unused armour's rust,
Removing from the wall
The corselet of the hall.

So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace,
But through adventurous war
Urged his active star ;

And, like the three-forked lightning, first
Breaking the clouds where it was nurs't
Did thorough his own side
His fiery way divide :

For 'tis all one to courage high,
The emulous or enemy,
And with such to enclose
Is more than to oppose !

Then burning through the air he went,
And palaces and temples rent ;
And Cæsar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.

'Tis madness to resist or blame
The face of angry Heaven's flame ;
And if we would speak true,
Much to the man is due,

Who from his private gardens, where
He lived reserved and austere,
 (As if his highest plot
 To plant the bergamot,)

Could by industrious valour climb
To ruin the great work of Time,
 And cast the kingdoms old
 Into another mould.

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain
 (But those do hold or break,
 As men are strong or weak),

Nature, that hateth emptiness,
Allows of penetration less,
 And therefore must make room
 Where greater spirits come.

What field of all the civil war,
Where his were not the deepest scar ?
 And Hampton shows what part
 He had of wiser art,

Where, twining subtile fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope
 That Charles himself might chase
 To Carisbrook's narrow case,

That thence the royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn :
 While round the armed bands
 Did clap their bloody hands.

He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
 But with his keener eye
 The axe's edge did try ;

Nor called the gods with vulgar spite
To vindicate his helpless right,
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

This was that memorable hour
Which first assured the forced power :
So, when they did design
The Capitol's first line,

A bleeding head, where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run ;
And yet in that the State
Foresaw its happy fate !

And now the Irish are ashamed
To see themselves in one year tamed :
So much one man can do
That doth both act and know.

They can affirm his praises best,
And have, though overcome, confessed
How good he is, how just,
And fit for highest trust.

Nor yet grown stiffer with command,
But still in the Republic's hand
(How fit he is to sway,
That can so well obey !),

He to the Commons' feet presents
A kingdom for his first year's rents,
And (what he may) forbears
His fame to make it theirs ;

And has his sword and spoils ungirt
To lay them at the public's skirt.
So when the falcon high
Falls heavy from the sky,

She, having killed, 'no more doth search
But on the next green bough to perch,
Where, when he first does lure,
The falconer has her sure.

What may not then our isle presume,
While victory his crest does plume ?
What may not others fear,
If thus he crowns each year ?

As Cæsar he, ere long, to Gaul,
To Italy an Hannibal,
And to all states not free
Shall climactèric be.

The Pict no shelter now shall find
Within his parti-coloured mind,
But from this valour sad
Shrink underneath the plaid :

Happy if in the tufted brake
The English hunter him mistake,
Nor lay his hounds in near
The Caledonian deer.

But thou, the war's and fortune's son,
March indefatigably on,
And for the last effect,
Still keep the sword erect !

Besides the force it has to fright
The spirits of the shady night,
The same arts that did gain
A power must it maintain.

Andrew Marvell

THE GARDEN

How vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, or bays,
And their uncessant labours see
Crown'd from some single herb or tree,
Whose short and narrow-verged shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid ;
While all the flowers and trees do close
To weave the garlands of Repose.

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence thy sister dear !
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men :
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow :
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name :
Little, alas, they know or heed
How far these beauties hers exceed !
Fair trees ! wheres'e'er your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passions' heat
Love hither makes his best retreat :
The gods, who mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race ;

Apollo hunted Daphne so
Only that she might laurel grow ;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life is this I lead !
Ripe apples drop about my head ;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine ;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach ;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less
Withdraws into its happiness ;
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find ;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas ;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside
My soul into the boughs does glide ;
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets and claps its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state
While man there walk'd without a mate :
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet !

But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there :
Two paradises 'twere in one,
To live in Paradise alone.

How well the skilful garden^r drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new !
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run :
And, as it works, th' industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers !

Andrew Marvell

TO HIS COY MISTRESS

HAD we but World enough, and Time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down, and think which way
To walk, and pass our long Loves Day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges side
Should'st Rubies find : I by the Tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood :
And you should if you please refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable Love should grow
Vaster than Empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine Eyes, and on thy Forehead gaze
Two hundred to adore each Breast :
But thirty thousand to the rest.

An Age at least to every part,
And the last Age should show your heart.
For, Lady, you deserve this state ;
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged Chariot hurrying near :
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast Eternity.
Thy Beauty shall no more be found ;
Nor, in thy marble Vault, shall sound
My echoing Song : then Worms shall try
That long preserv'd Virginity :
And your quaint Honour turn to dust ;
And into ashes all my Lust.
The Grave's a fine and private place,
But none I think do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew
And while thy willing Soul transpires
At every pore with instant Fires,
Now let us sport us while we may ;
And now, like am'rous birds of prey,
Rather at once our Time devour,
Than languish in his slow-chapt pow'r.
Let us roll all our Strength, and all
Our Sweetness, up into one Ball :
And tear our Pleasures with rough strife,
Through the Iron gates of Life.
Thus, though we cannot make our Sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

Andrew Marvell

A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS

O LITTLE self, within whose smallness lies
All that man was, and is, and will become,
Atom unseen that comprehends the skies
And tells the tracks by which the planets roam ;
That, without moving, knows the joys of wings,
The tiger's strength, the eagle's secrecy,
And in the hovel can consort with kings,
Or clothe a God with his own mystery.
O with what darkness do we cloak thy light,
What dusty folly gather thee for food,
Thou who alone art knowledge and delight,
The heavenly bread, the beautiful, the good.
O living self, O God, O morning star,
Give us thy light, forgive us what we are.

John Masefield

THE HEAVENS' MYSTERY

I COULD not sleep for thinking of the sky,
The unending sky with all its million suns
Which turn their planets everlastingly
In nothing, where the fire-haired comet runs.
If I could sail that nothing, I should cross
Silence and emptiness with dark stars passing ;
Then, in the darkness, see a point of gloss
Burn to a glow, and glare, and keep amassing,
And rage into a sun with wandering planets,
And drop behind ; and then, as I proceed,
See his last light upon his last moon's granites
Die to a dark that would be night indeed :
Night where my soul might sail a million years
In nothing, not even Death, not even tears.

John Masefield

WOODLAND PEACE

SWEET as Eden is the air,
 And Eden-sweet the ray.
 No Paradise is lost for them
 Who foot by branching root and stem,
 And lightly with the woodland share
 The change of night and day.

Here all say,
 We serve her, even as I :
 We brood, we strive to sky,
 We gaze upon decay,
 We wot of life through death,
 How each feeds each we spy ;
 And in a tangle round,
 Are patient ; what is dumb,
 We question not, nor ask
 The silent to give sound,
 The hidden to unmask,
 The distant to draw near.

And this the woodland saith :
 I know not hope or fear ;
 I take whate'er may come ;
 I raise my head to aspects fair,
 From foul I turn away.

Sweet as Eden is the air,
 And Eden-sweet the ray.

George Meredith

THE QUESTION WHITHER

I

WHEN we have thrown off this old suit,
So much in need of mending,
To sink among the naked mute,
Is that, think you, our ending ?
We follow many, more we lead,
And you who sadly turf us,
Believe not that all living seed
Must flower above the surface.

II

Sensation is a gracious gift,
But were it cramped to station,
The prayer to have it cast adrift,
Would spout from all sensation.
Enough if we have winked to sun,
Have sped the plough a season ;
There is a soul for labour done,
Endureth fixed as reason.

III

Then let our trust be firm in Good,
Though we be of the fasting ;
Our questions are a mortal brood,
Our work is everlasting.
We children of Beneficence
Are in its being sharers ;
And Whither vainer sounds than Whence,
For word with such wayfarers.

George Meredith

TO THE BODY

THOU inmost, ultimate
Council of judgment, palace of decrees,
Where the high senses hold their spiritual state,
Sued by earth's embassies,
And sign, approve, accept, conceive, create;

Create—thy senses close
With the world's pleas. The random odours reach
Their sweetness in the place of thy repose,
Upon thy tongue the peach,
And in thy nostrils breathes the breathing rose.

To thee, secluded one,
The dark vibrations of the sightless skies,
The lovely inexplicit colours run;
The light gropes for those eyes.
O thou august! thou dost command the sun.

Music, all dumb, hath trod
Into thine ear her one effectual way;
And fire and cold approach to gain thy nod,
Where thou call'st up the day,
Where thou awaitest the appeal of God.

Alice Meynell

THERE'S NAE LUCK ABOUT THE HOUSE

AND are ye sure the news is true?
And are ye sure he's weel?
Is this a time to think of wark?
Ye jauds, fling by your wheel!
Is this a time to think o' wark,
When Colin's at the door?
Gie me my cloak! I'll to the quay
And see him come ashore.

For there's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck ava,
There's little pleasure in the house
When our gudeman's awa.

Rise up and mak' a clean fireside,
Put on the muckle pot !
Gie little Kate her cotton gown,
And Jock his Sunday coat,
And mak' their shoon as black as slaes,
Their hose as white as snaw !
It's a' to please my ain gudeman,
For he's been long awa.

There's twa fat hens upon the bauk,
Been fed this month and mair :
Mak' haste and thraw their necks about,
That Colin weel may fare,
And mak' the table neat and clean,
Gar ilka thing look braw !
It's a' for love of my gudeman,
For he's been long awa.

O, gie me down my bigonet,
My bishop satin gown,
For I maun tell the bailie's wife
That Colin's come to town.
My Sunday's shoon they maun gae on,
My hose o' pearl blue !
'Tis a' to please my ain gudeman,
For he's baith leal and true.

Sae true his words, sae smooth his speech,
His breath's like caller air !
His very foot has music in't,
As he comes up the stair.

And will I see his face again ?
And will I hear him speak ?
I'm downright dizzy with the thought,—
In troth, I'm like to greet.

For there's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck ava,
There's little pleasure in the house
When our gudeman's awa.

William Julius Mickle

HOW SOON HATH TIME, THE SUBTLE THIEF OF YOUTH

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three-and twentieth year !
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth
That I to manhood am arrived so near ;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet, be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
'Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven.
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

John Milton

TO MR. CYRIACK SKINNER UPON HIS
BLINDNESS

CYRIACK, this three years' day these eyes, though
clear

To outward view of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot ;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope ; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask ?
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
In Liberty's defence, my noble task,¹
Of which all Europe talks from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's
vain mask

Content, though blind, had I no better guide.

John Milton

ON HIS BLINDNESS

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,—
“ Doth God exact day-labour, light denied ? ”

¹ Milton's blindness was complete by June, 1652. It had been hastened by his labours of the previous year in preparing his “ Defence of the People of England against Salmasius.”

I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or His own gifts. Who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state
Is kingly ; thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest :—
They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton

TO HIS LATE WIFE

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint ¹
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from Death by force, though pale and
faint.

Mine, as whom washed from spot of childbed taint
Purification in the Old Law did save,
And such as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind.
Her face was veiled ; yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
So clear as in no face with more delight.
But, O ! as to embrace me she inclined,
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

John Milton

¹ Milton's second wife, Catherine Woodcock, died in child-birth fifteen months after her marriage.

TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY

DAUGHTER to that good Earl,¹ once President
 Of England's Council and her Treasury,
 Who lived in both unstained with gold or fee,
 And left them both, more in himself content,
 Till the sad breaking of that Parliament
 Broke him, as that dishonest victory
 At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,
 Killed with report that old man eloquent.²
 Though later born than to have known the days
 Wherein your father flourished, yet by you,
 Madam, methinks I see him living yet :
 So well your words his noble virtues praise,
 That all both judge you to relate them true
 And to possess them, honoured Margaret.

John Milton

TO MR. LAWRENCE

LAWRENCE,³ of virtuous father virtuous son,
 Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
 Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
 Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
 From the hard season gaining? Time will run
 On smoother, till Favonius reinspire
 The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
 The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.
 What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
 Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
 To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice

¹ First Earl of Marlborough (1550-1629).

² Isocrates.

³ "Young Lawrence, the son of him that was President of Oliver's Council."—Phillips' "Life of Milton."

Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air ?
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

John Milton

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONTE
AVENGE, O Lord, Thy slaughter'd saints, whose
bones

Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold ;
Even them who kept Thy truth so pure of old
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not : in Thy book record their groans
Who were Thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant : that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who, having learnt Thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

John Milton

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL,
MAY 1652

*On the proposals of certain ministers at the Committee
for Propagation of the Gospel*¹

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,

¹ These proposals were for preserving the Established Church, with certain reforms, such as the inclusion of all Protestant sects. Milton sympathized with the party which opposed an establishment of any kind.

To peace and truth thy glorious way hast
ploughed,
And on the neck of crownèd Fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued ;
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots
imbrued,
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureate wreath : yet much
remains
To conquer still ; Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than War : new foes arise,
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose Gospel is their maw.

John Milton

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY

CAPTAIN, or Colonel, or Knight in Arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
He can requite thee ; for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower :
The great Emathian conquerer bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground : and the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

John Milton

ON SHAKESPEARE. 1630

WHAT needs my Shakespeare for his honoured bones,
The labour of an age in pilèd stones,
Or that his hallowed relics should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid ?
Dear son of memory, great heir of Fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name ?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a lifelong monument.
For whilst to the shame of slow-endeavouring art,
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,
Then thou our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving ;
And so sepulchred in such pomp dost lie,
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

John Milton

THE INVOCATION TO SABRINA

SABRINA fair,

Listen, where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braid of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair ;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen, and save !
Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus,
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace ;

By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook ;
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell ;
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands ;
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
And the songs of Sirens sweet ;
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligeia's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond-rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks ;
By all the nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance ;
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have.

Listen and save !

John Milton

THE SONG OF COMUS

THE star that bids the shepherd fold
Now the top of heaven doth hold,
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream,
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east.
Meanwhile welcome joy and feast,

Midnight shout and revelry,
Tipsy dance and jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.
Rigour now is gone to bed ;
And Advice with scrupulous head,
Strict Age, and sour Severity,
With their grave saws, in slumber lie.
We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry quire,
Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move ;
And, on the tawny sands and shelves,
Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves.
By dimpled brook and fountain-brim,
The wood nymphs, decked with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep :
What hath night to do with sleep ?
Night hath better sweets to prove ;
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come, let us our rites begin ;
'Tis only daylight that makes sin,
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
Hail, Goddess of nocturnal sport,
Dark-veiled Cotytto, to whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burns ! Mysterious dame,
That ne'er art called but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air !
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou ridest with Hecate, and befriend
Us thy vowed priests, till utmost end

Of all thy dues be done, and none left out ;
Ere the babbling eastern scout,
The nice Morn, on the Indian steep,
From her cabined loophole peep,
And to the tell-tale Sun descry
Our concealed solemnity !
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantastic round !

John Milton

THE LAST CHORUS OF COMUS

(The dances ended, the Spirit epiloguises)

To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky.
There I suck the liquid air,
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree.

Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring ;
The Graces, and the rosy-bosomed Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring.
There eternal summer dwells,
And west-winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purpled scarf can shew.

And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound,
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits the Assyrian queen.
But far above, in spangled sheen,
Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced
Holds his dear Psyche, sweet entranced
After her wandering labours long,
Till free consent the gods among
Makes her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy ; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done :
I can fly or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue ; she alone is free.
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime ;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

John Milton

LYCIDAS

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due ;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer !
Who would not sing for Lycidas ? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring ;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse :
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And, as he passes, turn
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud !

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill ;
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright

Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.

Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute ;
Tempered to the oaten flute,
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long ;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.

But, O ! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return !
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays,
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows ;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless
 deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas ?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me ! I fondly dream
" Had ye been there " . . . for what could that
 have done ?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,

When by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore ?

Alas ! what boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely, slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse ?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Næra's hair ?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble minds)
To scorn delights and live laborious days ;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. " But not the
praise,"

Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears :
" Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistening foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove ;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea,
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain ?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings

That blows from off each beaked promontory.
They knew not of his story ;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed :
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
“ Ah ! who hath reft,” quoth he, “ my dearest
pledge ? ”

Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean Lake ;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake :—
“ How well could I have spared for thee, young
swain,

Enow of such as, for their bellies' sake,
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold !
Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths ! that scarce themselves know how
to hold

A sheep-hook, or have learnt aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs !
What recks it them ? What need they ? They
are sped ;

And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs

Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw ;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread ;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Return, Alpheus ; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams ! Return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues !
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears ;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so, to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise,
Ay me ! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled ;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide

Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world ;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold.
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth :
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star, in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky ;
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the
waves,

Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more ;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.
Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals grey :
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay :
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,

And now was dropt into the western bay.
 At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue :
 To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

John Milton

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC

BLEST pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
 Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
 Wed your divine sounds and mixed power employ,
 Dead things with inbred sense able to pierce ;
 And to our high-raised eyes present
 That undisturbed so sweetly sit,
 Aye sung before the throne
 To Him that sits there,
 With saintly shout and solemn jubilee ;
 Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
 Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow,
 And the Cherubic host in thousand quires
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
 With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
 Hymns devout and holy psalms
 Singing everlastingly :
 That we on Earth, with undiscording voice,
 May rightly answer that melodious noise ;
 As once we did, till disproportioned sin
 Jarred against nature's chime, and with harsh din
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
 In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
 In first obedience, and their state of good.
 O, may we soon again renew that song,
 And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long,
 To His celestial consort us unite,
 To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light !

John Milton

ON TIME

FLY, envious Time, till thou run out thy race :
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping Hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace ;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross ;
So little is our loss,
& little is thy gain !
For, whenas each thing bad thou hast entombed,
And, last of all, thy greedy self consumed,
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss,
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood ;
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of Him, to whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heavenly-guided soul shall climb,
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,
Attired with stars we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee,
O Time !

John Milton

SHAMEFUL DEATH

THERE were four of us about that bed ;
The mass-priest knelt at the side.
I and his mother stood at the head,
Over his feet lay the bride ;
We were quite sure that he was dead,
Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,
He did not die in the day,
But in the morning twilight
His spirit pass'd away,
When neither sun nor moon was bright,
And the trees were merely grey.

He was not slain with the sword,
Knight's axe, or the knightly spear,
Yet spoke he never a word
After he came in here ;
I cut away the cord
From the neck of my brother dear.

He did not strike one blow,
For the recreants came behind,
In a place where the hornbeams grow,
A path right hard to find,
For the hornbeam boughs swing so,
That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,
When his arms were pinion'd fast,
Sir John the knight of the Fen,
Sir Guy of the Dolorous Blast,
With knights threescore and ten,
Hung brave Lord Hugh at last.

I am threescore and ten,
And my hair is all turn'd grey,
But I met Sir John of the Fen
Long ago on a summer day,
And am glad to think of the moment when
I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten,
And my strength is mostly pass'd,
But long ago I and my men,
When the sky was overcast,
And the smoke roll'd over the reeds of the fen,
Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.

And now, knights all of you,
I pray you pray for Sir Hugh,
A good knight and a true,
And for Alice his wife, pray too.

William Morris

SIMMENTHAL

FAR off the old snows evernew
With silver edges cleft the blue
Aloft, alone, divine ;
The sunny meadows silent slept,
Silence the sombre armies kept,
The vanguard of the pine.

In that thin air the birds are still,
No ringdove murmurs on the hill
Nor mating cushat calls ;
But gay cicadas singing sprang,
And waters from the forest sang
The song of waterfalls.

O Fate ! a few enchanted hours
Beneath the firs, among the flowers,
High on the lawn we lay,
Then turned again, contented well,
While bright about us flamed and fell
The rapture of the day.

And softly with a guileless awe
Beyond the purple lake she saw
 The embattled summits glow ;
She saw the glories melt in one,
The round moon rise, while yet the sun
 Was rosy on the snow.

Then like a newly singing bird
The child's soul in her bosom stirred ;
 I know not what she sung :—
Because the soft wind caught her hair,
Because the golden moon was fair,
 Because her heart was young.

I would her sweet soul ever may
Look thus from those glad eyes and grey,
 Unfearing, undefiled :
I love her ; when her face I see,
Her simple presence wakes in me
 The imperishable child.

Frederic W. H. Myers

SPRING

SPRING, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant
king !

Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing :—
Cuckoo, jug, jug, pu we, to witta woo !

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear ay birds tune this merry lay :—
Cuckoo, jug, jug, pu we, to witta woo !

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet :—
Cuckoo, jug, jug, pu we, to witta woo !

Spring, the sweet spring !

Thomas Nashe

SACRAMENTUM SUPREMUM

YE that with me have fought and failed and fought
To the last desperate trench of battle's crest,
Not yet to sleep, not yet ; our work is nought ;
On that last trench the fate of all may rest.
Draw near, my friends ; and let your thoughts be
high ;

Great hearts are glad when it is time to give ;
Life is no life to him that dares not die,
And death no death to him that dares to live.

Draw near together ; none be last or first ;
We are no longer names, but one desire ;
With the same burning of the soul we thirst,
And the same wine to-night shall quench our fire.
Drink ! to our fathers who begot us men,
To the dead voices that are never dumb ;
Then to the land of all our loves, and then
To the long parting, and the age to come.

Henry Newbolt

SONG FROM "DREAM-MARKET"

THE flowers that in thy garden rise
Fade and are gone when Summer flies.
And, as their sweets by time decay,
So shall thy hopes be cast away.

The Sun that gilds the creeping moss
Stayeth not Earth's eternal loss :
He is the lord of all that live,
Yet there is life he cannot give.

The stir of Morning's eager breath—
Beautiful Eve's impassioned death—
Thou lovest these, thou lovest well,
Yet of the Night thou canst not tell.

In every land thy feet may tread,
Time like a veil is round thy head :
Only the land thou seek'st with me
Never hath been nor yet shall be.

It is not far, it is not near,
Name it hath none that Earth can hear ;
But there thy Soul shall build again
Memories long destroyed of men,
And Joy thereby shall like a river
Wander from deep to deep for ever.

Henry Newbolt

THE CONSUMMATION

THERE is a pigeon in the apple-tree,
And when he moves the petals fall in showers,
And O how low, how slow, how rapturously,
He croons and croons again among the flowers !

Above the boughs a solemn cloud-bank climbs,
White, pure white, dazzling, a shield of light ;
Speck on its space, a lark, whose quick song chimes
With each brief pulse of wings, vaults t'ward the
height.

Below, a beetle on a stalk of grass
Slowly unharnesses his shuttered wings,
His tiny rainbow wings of shrivelled glass.
He leaps! He whirrs away. The grass-blade
swings.

Faint breezes through the branches wind and call.
It is the hour. This perfect hour is His,
Who, stooping through the depth, quiet, joy of all,
Prints on my upturned face a silent kiss.

Robert Nichols

STRANGE MEETING

It seemed that out of the battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
Through granites which Titanic wars had groined.
Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred,
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
Lifting distressful hands as if to bless.
And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall.
With a thousand fears that vision's face was grained ;
Yet no blood reached there from the upper ground,
And no guns thumped, or down the flues made
moan.

"Strange friend," I said, "here is no cause to
mourn."

"None," said the other, "save the undone years,
The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
Was my life also ; I went hunting wild
After the wildest beauty in the world,

Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,
But mocks the steady running of the hour,
And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here.
For by my glee might many men have laughed,
And of my weeping something has been left,
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
The pity of war, the pity war distilled.
Now men will go content with what we spoiled,
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress,
None will break ranks, though nations trek from
progress.

Courage was mine, and I had mystery,
Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery;
To miss the march of this retreating world
Into vain citadels that are not walled.
Then, when much blood had clogged their chariot-
wheels

I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.
I would have poured my spirit without stint
But not through wounds; not on the cess of war,
Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were.
I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
I knew you in this death: for so you frowned
Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.
I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.
Let us sleep now."

Wilfred Owen

THE TOYS

My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,

I struck him, and dismiss'd
With hard words and unkiss'd,
—His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet
From his late sobbing wet.
And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;
For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,
And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells,
And two French copper coins, rare there with
careful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray'd
To God, I wept, and said:
Ah! when at last we lie with trancèd breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And Thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath and say,
"I will be sorry for their childishness."

Coventry Patmore

REMEMBERED GRACE

SINCE succour to the feeblest of the wise
Is charge of nobler weight
Than the security
Of many and many a foolish soul's estate,
This I affirm,
Though fools will fools more confidently be :
Whom God doth once with heart to heart befriend,
He does so till the end ;
And having planted life's miraculous germ,
One sweet pulsation of responsive love,
He sets him sheer above,
Not sin and bitter shame
And wreck of fame,
But Hell's insidious and more black attempt,
The envy, malice, and pride,
Which men who share so easily condone
That few even list such ills as these to hide.
From these unalterably exempt
Through the remember'd grace
Of that divine embrace,
Of his sad errors none,
Though gross to blame,
Shall cast him lower than the cleansing flame,
Nor make him quite depart
From the small flock named "after God's own
heart,"
And to themselves unknown.
Nor can he quail
In faith, nor flush nor pale
When all the other idiot people spell
How this or that new prophet's word belies
Their last high oracle ;

But constantly his soul
 Points to its pole,
 Even as the needle points and knows not why ;
 And, under the ever-changing clouds of doubt,
 When others cry,
 " The stars, if stars there were,
 Are quenched and out ! "
 To him, uplooking t'ward the hills for aid,
 Appear, at need display'd,
 Gaps in the low-hung gloom, and, bright in air,
 Orion or the Bear.

Coventry Patmore

FAREWELL TO ARMS

His golden locks Time hath to silver turned—
 O Time too swift, O swiftness never ceasing !
 His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever spurned,
 But spurned in vain ; youth waneth by increasing !
 Beauty, strength, youth are flowers but fading seen ;
 Duty, faith, love are roots, and ever green.

His helmet now shall make an hive for bees,
 And, lovers' sonnets turned to holy psalms,
 A man-at-arms must now serve on his knees,
 And feed on prayers, which are [old] age his alms :
 But though from court to cottage he depart,
 His saint is sure of his unspotted heart.

And when he saddest sits in homely cell,
 He'll teach his swains this carol for a song :—
 " Bless'd be the hearts that wish my sovereign well,
 Cursed be souls that think her any wrong ! "
 Goddess, allow this aged man his right,
 To be your bedesman now that was your knight !

George Peele

There shall the Morn her earliest tears bestow,
There the first roses of the year shall blow ;
While angels with their silver wings o'ershade
The ground now sacred by thy relics made.

So, peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,
What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame.
How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not,
To whom related, or by whom begot ;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee ;
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be !
Poets themselves must fall, like those they sung,
Deaf the praised ear, and mute the tuncful tongue.
Even he, whose soul now melts in mournful lays,
Shall shortly want the generous tear he pays ;
Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart,
Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
The Muse forgot, and thou beloved no more.

Alexander Pope

SONG

THE merchant, to secure his treasure,
Conveys it in a borrow'd name :
Euphelia serves to grace my measure ;
But Chloe is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre,
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay ;
When Chloe noted her desire
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise ;
But with my numbers mix my sighs :
And while I sing Euphelia's praise,
I fix my soul on Chloe's eyes.

Fair Chloe blush'd : Euphelia frown'd :

I sung, and gazed : I play'd, and trembled :
And Venus to the Loves around

Remark'd, how ill we all dissembled.

Matthew Prior

THE BEST BELOVED

E'EN like two little bank-dividing brooks,

That wash the pebbles with their wanton streams,
And having ranged and searched a thousand nooks,

Meet both at length in silver-breasted Thames,
Where in a greater current they conjoin :
So I my Best-Beloved's am ; so He is mine.

E'en so we met ; and after long pursuit,

E'en so we join'd ; we both became entire ;
No need for either to renew a suit,

For I was flax and he was flames of fire ;
Our firm-united souls did more than twine ;
So I my Best-Beloved's am ; so He is mine.

If all those glittering Monarchs that command

The servile quarters of this earthly ball,
Should tender, in exchange, their shares of land,

I would not change my fortunes for them all :
Their wealth is but a counter to my coin :
The world's but theirs ; but my Beloved's mine.

Francis Quarles

WHEREFORE HIDEEST THOU THY FACE,
AND HOLDEST ME FOR THY ENEMY?—

(*Job xiii. 24*).

WHY dost Thou shade Thy lovely face? O why
Does that eclipsing hand, so long, deny
The Sun-shine of Thy soul-enliv'ning eye?

Without that Light what light remains in me?
Thou art my Life, my Way, my Light; in Thee
I live, I move, and by Thy beams I see.

Thou art my Life; If Thou but turn away,
My life's a thousand deaths: Thou art my Way;
Without Thee, Lord, I travel not, but stray.

My Light Thou art; without Thy glorious sight,
Mine eyes are dark'ned with perpetual night.
My God, Thou art my Way, my Life, my Light.

Thou art my Way; I wander, if Thou fly:
Thou art my Light; If hid, how blind am I?
Thou art my Life; If Thou withdraw, I die.

Mine eyes are blind and dark, I cannot see;
To whom, or whither should my darkness flee,
But to the Light? And who's that Light but Thee?

My path is lost; my wand'ring steps do stray;
I cannot safely go, nor safely stay;
Whom should I seek but Thee, my Path, my Way?

O, I am dead: To whom shall I, poor I,
Repair? To whom shall my sad ashes fly
But Life? And where is Life but in Thine eye?

And yet Thou turn'st away Thy face, and fly'st me ;
And yet I sue for Grace, and Thou deny'st me ;
Speak, art Thou angry, Lord, or only try'st me ?

Unscreen those heav'nly lamps, or tell me why
Thou shad'st Thy face ; Perhaps, Thou think'st, no
eye
Can view those flames, and not drop down and die.

If that be all, shine forth, and draw Thee nigher ;
Let me behold and die ; for my desire
Is Phoenix-like to perish in that Fire.

Death-conquer'd Laz'rus was redeem'd by Thee ;
If I am dead, Lord, set death's pris'ner free ;
Am I more spent, or stink I worse than he ?

If my puff'd light be out, give leave to tine
My shameless snuff at that bright Lamp of Thine ;
O what's Thy Light the less for lighting mine ?

If I have lost my Path, great Shepherd, say,
Shall I still wander in a doubtful way ?
Lord, shall a Lamb of Isr'el's sheepfold stray ?

Thou art the Pilgrim's Path ; the blind man's Eye ;
The dead man's Life ; On Thee my hopes rely ;
If Thou remove, I err ; I grope ; I die.

Disclose Thy Sun-beams ; close thy wings, and stay ;
See, see, how I am blind, and deaf, and stray,
O Thou, that art my Light, my Life, my Way.

Francis Quarles

TIME

EVEN such is Time, that takes in trust

Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust ;

Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days ;
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

Sir Walter Raleigh

HIS PILGRIMAGE

GIVE me my scallop-shell of quiet,

My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,

My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage ;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.

Blood must be my body's balmer ;

No other balm will there be given ;
Whilst my soul, like quiet palmer,
Travelleth towards the land of heaven ;
Over the silver mountains,
Where spring the nectar fountains :

There will I kiss

The bowl of bliss ;

And drink mine everlasting fill
Upon every milken hill.

My soul will be a-dry before ;
But after it will thirst no more.

Sir Walter Raleigh

I CANNOT CHANGE

I CANNOT change, as others do,
Though you unjustly scorn,
Since that poor swain, that sighs for you,
For you alone was born.
No, Phyllis, no, your heart to move
A surer way I'll try,
And, to revenge my slighted love,
Will still love on and die.

When, kill'd with grief, Amyntas lies,
And you to mind shall call
The sighs that now unpity'd rise,
The tears that vainly fall,
That welcome hour, that ends this smart,
Will then begin your pain ;
For such a faithful tender heart
Can never break in vain.

John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester

UP-HILL

DOES the road wind up-hill all the way ?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day ?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place ?
A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face ?
You cannot miss that inn.

just in sight ?
standing at that door.

level-sore and weak ?
shall find the sum.
for me and all who seek ?
all who come.

Christina Rossetti

HEAVEN OVERARCHES EARTH AND SEA

HEAVEN overarches earth and sea,
Earth-sadness and sea-bitterness,
Heaven overarches you and me :
A little while and we shall be—
Please God—where there is no more sea
Nor barren wilderness.

Heaven overarches you and me,
And all earth's gardens and her graves.
Lock up with me, until we see
The day break and the shadows flee.
What though to-night wrecks you and me
If so to-morrow saves ?

Christina Rossetti

AMOR MUNDI

“O WHERE are you going with your love-locks
flowing,
On the west wind blowing along this valley
track ? ”
“The downhill path is easy, come with me and it
please ye,
We shall escape the uphill by never turning back.”

So they two went together in glowing August
weather,

The honey-breathing heather lay to their left
and right ;

And dear she was to doat on, her swift feet seemed
to float on

The air like soft twin pigeons too sportive to
alight.

“ Oh, what is that in heaven where grey cloud-
flakes are seven,

Where blackest clouds hang riven just at the
rainy skirt ? ”

“ Oh, that’s a meteor sent us, a message dumb,
portentous,

An undeciphered solemn signal of help or hurt.”

“ Oh, what is that glides quickly where velvet
flowers grow thickly,

Their scent comes rich and sickly ? ” “ A scaled
and hooded worm.”

“ Oh, what’s that in the hollow, so pale I quake to
follow ? ”

“ Oh, that’s a thin dead body which waits the
eternal term.”

“ Turn again, O my sweetest,—turn again, false and
fleetest :

This beaten way thou beatest, I fear is hell’s own
track.”

“ Nay, too steep for hill mounting ; nay, too late
for cost counting :

The downhill path is easy, but there’s no turning
back.”

Christina Rossetti

SONG

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me ;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree :
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet ;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain ;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain :
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

Christina Rossetti

THE CONVENT THRESHOLD

THERE'S blood between us, love, my love.
There's father's blood, there's brother's blood ;
And blood's a bar I cannot pass :
I choose the stairs that mount above,
Stair after golden skyward stair,
To city and to sea of glass.
My lily feet are soiled with mud,
With scarlet mud which tells a tale
Of hope that was, of guilt that was,
Of love that shall not yet avail ;
Alas, my heart, if I could bare
My heart, this selfsame stain is there :

I seek the sea of glass and fire
To wash the spot, to burn the snare ;
Lo, stairs are meant to lift us higher :
Mount with me, mount the kindled stair.

Your eyes look earthward, mine look up.
I see the far-off city grand,
Beyond the hills a watered land,
Beyond the gulf a gleaming strand
Of mansions where the righteous sup ;
Who sleep at ease among their trees,
Or wake to sing a cadenced hymn
With Cherubim and Seraphim ;
They bore the Cross, they drained the cup,
Racked, roasted, crushed, wrenched limb from
limb,
They the offscouring of the world :
The heaven of starry heavens unfurled,
The sun before their face is dim.

You looking earthward, what see you ?
Milk-white, wine-fleshed among the vines,
Up and down leaping, to and fro,
Most glad, most full, made strong with wines.
Blooming as peaches pearled with dew,
Their golden windy hair afloat,
Love-music warbling in their throat,
Young men and women come and go.

You linger, yet the time is short :
Flee for your life, gird up your strength
To flee ; the shadows stretched at length
Show that day wanes, that night draws nigh ;
Flee to the mountain, tarry not.
Is this a time for smile and sigh,

For songs among the secret trees
Where sudden blue birds nest and sport ?
The time is short and yet you stay :
To-day, while it is called to-day,
Kneel, wrestle, knock, do violence, pray ;
To-day is short, to-morrow nigh :
Why will you die ? Why will you die ?

You sinned with me a pleasant sin :
Repent with me, for I repent.
Woe's me the lore I must unlearn !
Woe's me that easy way we went,
So rugged when I would return !
How long until my sleep begin,
How long shall stretch these nights and days ?
Surely, clean Angels cry, she prays ;
She laves her soul with tedious tears :
How long must stretch these years and years ?

I turn from you my cheeks and eyes,
My hair which you shall see no more—
Alas for joy that went before,
For joy that dies, for love that dies.
Only my lips shall turn to you,
My vivid lips that cry, Repent
O weary life, O weary Lent,
O weary time whose stars are few.

How should I rest in Paradise,
Or sit on steps of heaven alone,
If Saints and Angels spoke of love
Should I not answer from my throne ?
Have pity upon me, ye my friends,
For I have heard the sound thereof :
Should I not turn with yearning eyes,
Turn earthwards with a pitiful pang ?

Oh save me from a pang in heaven.
By all the gifts we took and gave,
Repent, repent, and be forgiven :
This life is long, but yet it ends ;
Repent and purge your soul and save :
No gladder song the morning stars
Upon their birthday morning sang
Than Angels sing when one repents.

I tell you what I dreamed last night :
A spirit with transfigured face
Fire-footed clomb an infinite space.
I heard his hundred pinions clang,
Heaven-bells rejoicing rang and rang,
Heaven-air was thrilled with subtle scents,
Worlds spun upon their rushing cars :
He mounted shrieking : " Give me light."
Still light was poured on him, more light ;
Angels, Archangels, he outstripped
Exultant in exceeding might,
And trod the skirts of Cherubim.
Still " Give me light," he shrieked ; and dipped
His thirsty face, and drank a sea,
Athirst with thirst it could not slake.
I saw him, drunk with knowledge, take
From aching brows the aureole crown—
His locks writhed like a cloven snake—
He left his throne to grovel down
And lick the dust of Seraphs' feet :
For what is knowledge duly weighed ?
Knowledge is strong, but love is sweet ;
Yet all the progress he had made
Was but to learn that all is small
Save love, for love is all in all.

I tell you what I dreamed last night :
It was not dark, it was not light,
Cold dews had drenched my plenteous hair
Through clay ; you came to seek me there.
And " Do you dream of me ? " you said.
My heart was dust that used to leap
To you ; I answered half asleep :
" My pillow is damp, my sheets are red,
There's a leaden tester to my bed :
Find you a warmer playfellow,
A warmer pillow for your head,
A kinder love to love than mine."
You wrung your hands ; while I, like lead,
Crashed downwards through the sodden earth
You smote your hands but not in mirth,
And reeled but were not drunk with wine.

For all night long I dreamed of you :
I woke and prayed against my will,
Then slept to dream of you again.
At length I rose and knelt and prayed :
I cannot write the words I said,
My words were slow, my tears were few ;
But through the dark my silence spoke
Like thunder. When this morning broke,
My face was pinched, my hair was grey,
And frozen blood was on the sill
Where stifling in my struggle I lay.

If now you saw me you would say :
Where is the face I used to love ?
And I would answer : Gone before ;
It tarries veiled in Paradise.
When once the morning star shall rise,
When earth with shadow flees away

And we stand safe within the door,
Then you shall lift the veil thereof.
Look up, rise up : for far above
Our palms are grown, our place is set ;
There we shall meet as once we met,
And love with old familiar love.

Christina Rossetti

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

THE blessèd Damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven ;
Her eyes knew more of rest and shade
Than waters stilled at even ;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn ;
And her hair lying down her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers ;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers ;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To *one*, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face . . .
Nothing : the Autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on ;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun ;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and blackness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

She scarcely heard her sweet new friends :
Playing at holy games,
Softly they spake among themselves
Their virginal chaste names ;
And the souls, mounting up to God,
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed above the vast
Waste sea of worlds that swarm ;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven, she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove.
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path ; and now she spoke, as when
The stars sung in their spheres.

The sun was gone now. The curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf. And now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sung together.

“ I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come,” she said.
“ Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed ?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength ?
And shall I feel afraid ?

“ When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light,
And we will step down as to a stream
And bathe there in God's sight.

“ We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayers sent up to God ;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

“ We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree,
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

“And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here ; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.”

(Ah sweet ! Just now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there
Fain to be hearkened ? When those bells
Possessed the midday air,
Was she not stepping to my side
Down all the trembling stair ?)

“We two,” she said, “will seek the groves
Where the Lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret, and Rosalys.

“Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded ;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robcs for them
Who are just born, being dead.

“He shall fear, haply, and be dumb ;
Then I will lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak :
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the unnumbered ransomed heads
Bowed with their aureoles :
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me :—
Only to live as once on earth
At peace—only to be
As then awhile, for ever now
Together, I and he."

She gazed, and listened, and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
The light thrilled past her, filled
With angels in strong level lapse.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their flight
Was vague in distant spheres ;
And then she laid her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

EVERYONE SANG

EVERYONE suddenly burst out singing ;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom,
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark-green fields ; on—on—and out
of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted ;
And beauty came like the setting sun ;
My heart was shaken with tears ; and horror
Drifted away . . . O, but Everyone
Was a bird ; and the song was wordless ; the
singing will never be done.

Siegfried Sassoon

PROUD MAISIE

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early ;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

“ Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me ? ”—

“ When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.”

“ Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly ? ”—

“ The grey-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

“ The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady ;

The owl from the steeple sing :—

‘ Welcome, proud lady ! ’ ”

Sir Walter Scott

WHERE SHALL THE LOVER REST

WHERE shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted for ever ?
Where through groves deep and high
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die
Under the willow.

Eleu loro ! Soft shall be his pillow !

There through the summer day
Cool streams are laving ;
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving ;
There thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted for ever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never !

Eleu loro ! Never, O never !

Where shall the traitor rest,
He, the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin, and leave her ?
In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying.

Eleu loro ! There shall he be lying !

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted ;
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted ;
Shame and dishonour sit
By his grave ever ;
Blessing shall hallow it,—
Never, O never !
Eleu loro ! Never, O never !
Sir Walter Scott

THE ROVER

A WEARY lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine !
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine.
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green—
No more of me you knew
My Love !
No more of me you knew.
“ This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain ;
But she shall bloom in winter snow
Ere we two meet again.”
He turn'd his charger as he spake
Upon the river shore,
He gave the bridle-reins a shake,
Said “ Adieu for evermore
My Love !
And adieu for evermore.”
Sir Walter Scott

CORONACH

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font reappearing
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow !

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber !
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone ; and for ever !

Sir Walter Scott

THE OUTLAW

O, BRIGNAL banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen.

And as I rode by Dalton-hall
Beneath the turrets high,
A maiden on the castle-wall
Was singing merrily,—

“O, Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.”

“If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we,
That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
As blithe as Queen of May.”

Yet sung she, “Brignal banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.

I read you, by your bugle-horn,
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
To keep the king's greenwood.”

“A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light ;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night.”

Yet sung she, " Brignal banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay ;
I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his Queen of May !

With burnished brand and musketoon,
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum."
" I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear ;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
My comrades take the spear.
And O ! though Brignal banks be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May !

Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die ;
The fiend, whose lantern lights the mead,
Were better mate than I !
And when I'm with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.
Yet Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen."

Sir Walter Scott

SOUND, SOUND THE CLARION

SOUND, sound the clarion, fill the life!

To all the sensual world proclaim,

One crowded hour of glorious life

Is worth an age without a name.

Major Mordant

PHYLLIS IS MY ONLY JOY

PHYLLIS is my only joy,

Faithless as the winds or seas,

Sometimes cunning, sometimes coy,

Yet she never fails to please :

If with a frown

I am cast down,

Phyllis, smiling

And beguiling,

Makes me happier than before.

Though alas ! too late I find

Nothing can her fancy fix ;

Yet the moment she is kind

I forgive her all her tricks,

Which though I see,

I can't get free :

She deceiving,

I believing,

What need lovers wish for more ?

Sir Charles Sedley

DREAMING ON THINGS TO COME

WHEN in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have express'd
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring ;
And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing :
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

William Shakespeare

SINCE FIRST I SAW YOU

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah, yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived ;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived :
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred :
Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

William Shakespeare

EXEGI MONUMENTUM

SHALL I compare thee to a summer's day ?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate :
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date :
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd ;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd.
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest ;
Nor shall death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest :
 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare

THOUGHT'S SESSIONS

WHEN to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste :
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long-since-cancelled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight.
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before :
—But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

William Shakespeare

~~SHORT-SEE SHINE~~

FULL many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain tops with sovran eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace.
E'en so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow;
But out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun
staineth.

William Shakespeare

ABSENCE

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen,
What old December's bareness every where!
And yet this time removed was summer's time:
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans, and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;
Or if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer,
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

William Shakespeare

NOT PASSION'S SLAVE

THEY that have power to hurt, and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow,—
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces,
And husband nature's riches from expense ;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others, but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die ;
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity :

For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds ;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

William Shakespeare

THE TIME IS OUT OF JOINT

TIRED with all these, for restful death I cry—
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive Good attending captain Ill :

—Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

William Shakespeare

TIME'S CONQUEROR

SINCE brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
But sad mortality o'ersways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower ?
O how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout
Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays ?
O fearful meditation ! where, alack !
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid ?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back,
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid ?

O ! none, unless this miracle have might,
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

William Shakespeare

~~LOVE'S NOT~~ TIME'S FOOL

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove :
O, no ! it is an ever fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken ;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be
· taken.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come ;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom :—

If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

William Shakespeare

THE TWILIGHT OF MY DAY

THAT time of year thou mayst in me behold,
 When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
 Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
 Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
 In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
 As after Sunset fadeth in the West,
 Which by and by black night doth take away,
 Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
 In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
 That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
 As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
 Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more
 strong,

To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

William Shakespeare

ENVOY

IF thou survive my well-contented day
 When that churl Death my bones with dust shall
 cover,
 And shall by fortune once more re-survey
 These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
 Compare them with the bettering of the time,
 And though they be outstripp'd by every pen,
 Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
 Exceeded by the height of happier men.
 O then vouchsafe me but this loving thought :
 " Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing
 age,

A dearer birth than this his love had brought
To march in ranks of better equipage :
But since he died, and poets better prove,
Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his love."

William Shakespeare

TIME'S CHANGES

LIKE as the waves make towards the pebbled shore
So do our minutes hasten to their end ;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow ;
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow :—
And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

William Shakespeare

WHEN I AM DEAD

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it ; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.

O, if, I say, you look upon this verse
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay !
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

William Shakespeare

WHERE THE BEE SUCKS

WHERE the bee sucks, there suck I ;
In a cowslip's bell I lie ;
There I couch when owls do cry ;
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily ;
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

William Shakespeare

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

UNDER the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither !
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.
Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,

Come hither, come hither, come hither !

Here shall he see

No enemy

But winter and rough weather.

William Shakespeare

SIGH NO MORE, LADIES

SIGH no more, ladies, sigh no more ;

Men were deceivers ever ;

One foot in sea, and one on shore,

To one thing constant never.

Then sigh not so,

But let them go,

And be you blythe and bonny,

Converting all your sounds of woe

Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,

Of dumps so dull and heavy ;

The fraud of men was ever so,

Since summer first was leafy.

Then sigh not so,

But let them go,

And be you blythe and bonny,

Converting all your sounds of woe

Into Hey nonny, nonny.

William Shakespeare

WHO IS SILVIA

Who is Silvia ? what is she,

That all our swains commend her ?—

Holy, fair, and wise is she ;

The heaven such grace did lend her,

That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair ?
For beauty lives with kindness ;
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness ;
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling ;
She excels each mortal thing,
Upon the dull earth dwelling :
To her let us garlands bring.

William Shakespeare

IT WAS A LOVER AND HIS LASS

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green corn-field did pass,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding ;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In spring time, etc.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that life was but a flower
In spring time, etc.

And, therefore, take the present time
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
For love is crowned with the prime
In spring time, etc.

William Shakespeare

TAKE, O, TAKE THOSE LIPS AWAY

TAKE, O, take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn,
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn !
But my kisses bring again,
Seals of love though sealed in vain.

William Shakespeare

O MISTRESS MINE, WHERE ARE YOU
ROAMING ?

O MISTRESS mine, where are you roaming ?
O ! stay and hear ! your true-love's coming,
That can sing both high and low ;
Trip no further, pretty sweeting ;
Journeys end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love ? 'tis not hereafter ;
Present mirth hath present laughter ;

What's to come is still unsure :
In delay there lies no plenty ;
Then come kiss me, Sweet-and-twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

William Shakespeare

WINTER

WHEN icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipped, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl :—
To-whit !

To-who !—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all around the wind doth blow,
 And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
 And birds sit brooding in the snow,
 And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
 When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
 Then nightly sings the staring owl :—

To-whit !

To-who !—a merry note,
 While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

William Shakespeare

BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
 Thou art not so unkind
 As man's ingratitude ;
 Thy tooth is not so keen,
 Because thou art not seen,
 Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh ho ! sing, heigh ho ! unto the green holly ;
 Most friendship is feigning, most loving men only ;

Then, heigh ho, the holly !
 This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
 That dost not bite so nigh
 As benefits forgot ;
 Though thou the waters warp,
 Thy sting is not so sharp
 As friend remembered not.

Heigh ho ! sing heigh ho !

William Shakespeare

CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH

CRABBED Age and Youth
Cannot live together :
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care ;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather ;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short ;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame ;
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold ;
Youth is wild, and Age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee ;
Youth, I do adore thee ;
O, my Love, my Love is young !
Age, I do defy thee :
O, sweet shepherd, hie thee !
For methinks thou stay'st too long.
William Shakespeare

A DIRGE

FULL fathom five thy father lies ;
Of his bones are coral made ;
Those are pearls that were his eyes ;
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell ;
Hark ! now I hear them,—
Burden—ding-dong, bell !
William Shakespeare

SONG

COME away, come away, Death,
And in sad cypres let me be laid ;
Fly away, fly away, breath ;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O prepare it !
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strown ;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corse, where my bones shall be thrown.
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O, where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there !

William Shakespeare

FIDELE'S DIRGE

FEAR no more the heat o' the sun
Nor the furious winter's rages !
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages :
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke !
Care no more to clothe, and eat ;
To thee the reed is as the oak :
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone !
Fear not slander, censure rash ;
Thou hast finished joy and moan :
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

William Shakespeare

TO A SKYLARK

HAIL to thee, blithe Spirit !
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest ;
Like a cloud of fire,
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight ;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight :

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is over-
flow'd.

What thou art we know not ;
What is most like thee ?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody ;

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not :

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower :

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from
the view :

Like a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflower'd,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-
winged thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awaken'd flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine :
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal
Or triumphal chaunt,
Match'd with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain ?
What fields, or waves, or mountains ?
What shapes of sky or plain ?
What love of thine own kind ? what ignorance of
pain ?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be :
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee :
Thou lovest, but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal
stream ?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not :
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught ;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest
thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear ;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground !

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now !

Percy Bysshe Shelley

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes ! O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingéd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill ;

Wild spirit which art moving everywhere ;
Destroyer and preserver ; hear, oh, hear !

II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion, t

Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning ! there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge.

Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge

Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,

Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst : oh, hear !

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet the sense faints picturing them ! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves : oh, hear !

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear ;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee ;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable ! If even

I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision,—I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh ! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud !

I fall upon the thorns of life ! I bleed !

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is :

What if my leaves are falling like its own !
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit ! Be thou me, impetuous one !

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth ;
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth,
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind ;
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy ! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind ?

Percy Bysshe Shelley

THE CLOUD

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers
From the seas and the streams ;

I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noon-day dreams.

From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,

When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.

I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
 And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
 And laugh as I pass in thunder.
I sift the snow on the mountains below,
 And their great pines groan aghast ;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
 While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers,
 Lightning my pilot sits,
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
 It struggles and howls at fits.
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
 This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
 In the depths of the purple sea ;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
 Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
 The Spirit he loves remains ;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
 Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes
 And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
 When the morning star shines dead,
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
 Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
 In the light of its golden wings ;
And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea
 beneath,
 Its ardours of rest and of love,

And the crimson pall of eve may fall
 From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest on mine airy nest
 As still as a brooding dove.

That orb'd maiden with white fire laden,
 Whom mortals call the moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor
 By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
 Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
 The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee
 Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
 Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
 Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone,
 And the moon's with a girdle of pearl.
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim
 When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
 Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof—
 The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch, through which I march
 With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
 Is the million-coloured bow:
The sphere-fire above its soft colours wove,
 While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water
 And the nursling of the sky ;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores :
 I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain when, with never a stain,
 The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex
 gleams
 Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
 And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the
 tomb,
 I arise and unbuild it again.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS

MANY a green isle needs must be
In the deep wide sea of misery,
Or the mariner, worn and wan,
Never thus could voyage on
Day and night, and night and day,
Drifting on his dreary way,
With the solid darkness black
Closing round his vessel's track ;
Whilst above, the sunless sky
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,
And behind the tempest fleet
Hurries on with lightning feet,
Riving sail, and cord, and plank,
Till the ship has almost drank

Death from the o'er-brimming deep ;
And sinks down, down, like that sleep
When the dreamer seems to be
Weltering through eternity ;
And the dim low line before
Of a dark and distant shore
Still recedes, as ever still
Longing with divided will,
But no power to seek or shun,
He is ever drifted on
O'er the unreposing wave,
To the haven of the grave.
What, if there no friends will greet ;
What, if there no heart will meet
His with love's impatient beat ;
Wander wheresoe'er he may,
Can he dream before that day
To find refuge from distress
In friendship's smile, in love's caress ?

Ah, many flowering islands lie
In the waters of wide Agony :
To such a one this morn was led
My bark, by soft winds piloted.
—'Mid the mountains Euganean
I stood listening to the pæan
With which the legioned rooks did hail
The sun's uprise majestic :
Gathering round with wings all hoar,
Through the dewy mist they soar
Like gray shades, till the eastern heaven
Bursts ; and then, as clouds of even
Fleck'd with fire and azure, lie
In the unfathomable sky,

So their plumes of purple grain
Starred with drops of golden rain
Gleam above the sunlight woods,
As in silent multitudes
On the morning's fitful gale
Through the broken mist they sail ;
And the vapours cloven and gleaming
Follow down the dark steep streaming,
Till all is bright, and clear, and still
Round the solitary hill.

Beneath is spread like a green sea
The waveless plain of Lombardy,
Bounded by the vaporous air,
Islanded by cities fair ;
Underneath day's azure eyes,
Ocean's nursling, Venice lies,—
A peopled labyrinth of walls,
Amphitrite's destined halls,
Which her hoary sire now paves
With his blue and beaming waves.
Lo ! the sun upsprings behind,
Broad, red, radiant, half-reclined
On the level quivering line
Of the waters crystalline ;
And before that chasm of light,
As within a furnace bright,
Column, tower, and dome, and spire,
Shine like obelisks of fire,
Pointing with inconstant motion
From the altar of dark ocean
To the sapphire-tinted skies ;
As the flames of sacrifice
From the marble shrines did rise

As to pierce the dome of gold
Where Apollo spoke of old.

Sun-girt City ! thou hast been
Ocean's child, and then his queen ;
Now is come a darker day,
And thou soon must be his prey,
If the power that raised thee here
Hallow so thy watery bier.
A less drear ruin then than now,
With thy conquest-branded brow
Stooping to the slave of slaves
From thy throne among the waves
Wilt thou be,—when the sea-mew
Flies, as once before it flew,
O'er thine isles depopulate,
And all is in its ancient state,
Save where many a palace gate
With green sea-flowers overgrown
Like a rock of ocean's own,
Topples o'er the abandoned sea
As the tides change sullenly.
The fisher on his watery way
Wandering at the close of day,
Will spread his sail and seize his oar
Till he pass the gloomy shore,
Lest thy dead should, from their sleep,
Bursting o'er the starlight deep,
Lead a rapid masque of death
O'er the waters of his path.

Noon descends around me now :
'Tis the noon of autumn's glow,
When a soft and purple mist
Like a vaporous amethyst,

Or an air-dissolved star
Mingling light and fragrance, far
From the curved horizon's bound
To the point of heaven's profound,
Fills the overflowing sky ;
And the plains that silent lie
Underneath ; the leaves unsodden
Where the infant frost has trodden
With his morning-winged feet
Whose bright print is gleaming yet ;
And the red and golden vines
Piercing with their trellised lines
The rough, dark-skirted wilderness ;
The dun and bladed grass no less,
Pointing from this hoary tower
In the windless air ; the flower
Glimmering at my feet ; the line
Of the olive-sandalled Apennine
In the south dimly islanded ;
And the Alps, whose snows are spread
High between the clouds and sun ;
And of living things each one ;
And my spirit, which so long
Darkened this swift stream of song,
Interpenetrated lie
By the glory of the sky ;
Be it love, light, harmony,
Odour, or the soul of all
Which from heaven like dew doth fall,
Or the mind which feeds this verse,
Peopling the lone universe.

Noon descends, and after noon
Autumn's evening meets me soon,
Leading the infantine moon,

And that one star, which to her
Almost seems to minister
Half the crimson light she brings
From the sunset's radiant springs :
And the soft dreams of the morn
(Which like winged winds had borne
To that silent isle, which lies
'Mid remembered agonies,
The frail bark of this lone being),
Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,
And its ancient pilot, Pain,
Sits beside the helm again.

Other flowering isles must be
In the sea of life and agony :
Other spirits float and flee
O'er that gulf ; e'en now, perhaps,
On some rock the wild wave wraps,
With folded wings they waiting sit
For my bark, to pilot it
To some calm and blooming cove ;
Where for me, and those I love,
May a windless bower be built,
Far from passion, pain, and guilt,
In a dell 'mid lawny hills
Which the wild sea-murmur fills,
And soft sunshine, and the sound
Of old forests echoing round,
And the light and smell divine
Of all flowers that breathe and shine.
—We may live so happy there,
That the spirits of the air
Envyng us, may even entice
To our healing paradise

The polluting multitude;
But their rage would be subdued
By that clime divine and calm,
And the winds whose wings rain balm
On the uplifted soul, and leaves
Under which the bright sea heaves;
While each breathless interval
In their whisperings musical
The inspired soul supplies
With its own deep melodies;
And the love which heals all strife
Circling, like the breath of life,
All things in that sweet abode
With its own mild brotherhood:
They, not it, would change; and soon
Every sprite beneath the moon
Would repent its envy vain,
And the earth grow young again.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

HYMN OF PAN

I

From the forests and highlands
We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
Where loud waves are dumb
Listening my sweet pipings.
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle-bushes,
The cicale above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass,
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
Listening my sweet pipings.

II

Liquid Penëus was flowing,
And all dark Tempe lay
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
The light of the dying day,
Speeded by my sweet pipings.
The Sileni, and Sylvens, and Fauns,
And the Nymphs of the woods and the waves,
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,
And the brink of the dewy caves,
And all that did then attend and follow
Were silent with love, as you know, Apollo,
With envy of my sweet pipings.

III

I sang of the dancing stars,
I sang of the dædal Earth,
And of Heaven—and the giant wars,
And Love, and Death, and Birth,—
And then I changed my pipings,—
Singing how down the vale of Menalus
I pursued a maiden and clasped a reed :
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus !
It breaks in our bosom and then we bleed :
All wept, as I think both ye now would,
If envy or age had not frozen your blood,
At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.
Percy Bysshe Shelley

THE WORLD'S GREAT AGE BEGINS ANEW

THE world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn :
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far ;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning-star ;
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize ;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies ;
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

O, write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be !
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free,
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew !

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime,
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued :
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

O, cease ! must hate and death return ?

Cease ! must men kill and die ?

Cease ! drain not to its dregs the urn

Of bitter prophecy.

The world is weary of the past,

O, might it die or rest at last !

Percy Bysshe Shelley

MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

MUSIC, when soft voices die,

Vibrates in the memory ;

Odours, when sweet violets sicken,

Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,

Are heaped for the beloved's bed :

And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,

Love itself shall slumber on.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

THE POET

ON a poet's lips I slept

Dreaming like a love-adept

In the sound his breathing kept ;

Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,

But feeds on the ærial kisses

Of shapes that haunt thought's wildernesses.

He will watch from dawn to gloom

The lake-reflected sun illumine

The yellow bees in the ivy bloom,

Nor heed nor see what things they be ;

But from these create he can

Forms more real than living man,

Nurslings of immortality !

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I FEAR THY KISSES

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,
Thou needest not fear mine :
My spirit is too deeply laden P
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion,
Thou needest not fear mine :
Innocent is the heart's devotion
With which I worship thine.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE fountains mingle with the river
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion ;
Nothing in the world is single,
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle—
Why not I with thine ?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another ;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother :
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea :
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me ?

Percy Bysshe Shelley

THE INDIAN SERENADE

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright :
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me—who knows how !
To thy chamber window, Sweet !

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
And the champak odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream .
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart ;—
As I must on thine,
O beloved as thou art !

O, lift me from the grass !
I die ! I faint ! I fail !
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas !
My heart beats loud and fast—
O, press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last !

Percy Bysshe Shelley

RARELY, RARELY COMEST THOU

RARELY, rarely comest thou,

Spirit of Delight !

Wherefore hast thou left me now

Many a day and night ?

Many a weary night and day

'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me

Win thee back again ?

With the joyous and the free

Thou wilt scoff at pain.

Spirit false ! thou hast forgot

All but those who need thee not.

As a lizard with the shade

Of a trembling leaf,

Thou with sorrow art dismayed ;

Even the sighs of grief

Reproach thee, that thou art not near,

And reproach thou wilt not hear.

Let me set my mournful ditty

To a merry measure ;

Thou wilt never come for pity,

Thou wilt come for pleasure ;

Pity then will cut away

Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

I love all that thou lovest,

Spirit of Delight !

The fresh Earth in new leaves dressed,

And the starry night.

Autumn evening, and the morn

When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms
Of the radiant frost ;
I love waves, and winds, and storms—
Every thing almost
Which is Nature's, and may be
Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude,
And such society
As is quiet, wise and good ;
Between thee and me
What difference ?—But thou dost possess
The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,
And like light can flee ;
But above all other things,
Spirit, I love thee—
Thou art love and life ! O, come,
Make once more my heart thy home !

Percy Bysshe Shelley

THE QUESTION

I DREAMED that as I wandered by the way
Bare winter suddenly was changed to spring,
And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kissed it and then fled, as thou mightest in
a dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets ;
Faint oxlips ; tender blue-bells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved ; and that tall flower that
wets—

Like a child, half in tenderness and mirth—
It's mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cow-bind and the moonlight-colour'd May,
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
Was the bright dew yet drained not by the day ;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine
With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray ;
And flowers azure, black, and streaked with gold,
Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad flag-flowers, purple pranked with
white,
And starry river buds among the sedge,
And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light ;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues, which in their natural bowers
Were mingled or opposed, the like array

Kept these imprison'd children of the Hours
Within my hand,—and then, elate and gay,
I hasten'd to the spot whence I had come
That I might there present it—O! to Whom?

Percy Bysshe Shelley

ONE WORD IS TOO OFTEN PROFANED

ONE word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love ;
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not :
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow ?

Percy Bysshe Shelley

OZYMANDIAS

I MET a traveller from an antique land
Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed ;
And on the pedestal these words appear :
“ My name is Ozymandias, king of kings :
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair ! ”
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

A SONG

A Widow bird sate mourning for her love
Upon a wintry bough ;
The frozen wind crept on above,
The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,
No flower upon the ground,
And little motion in the air
Except the mill-wheel's sound.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

A DIRGE

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud
Grief too sad for song ;
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all the night long ;
Sad storm whose tears are vain,
Bare woods whose branches stain,
Deep caves and dreary main,
Wail for the world's wrong !

Percy Bysshe Shelley

TO THE MOON

ART thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

Percy Bysshe Shelley

TO NIGHT

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!

Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear—
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried :

“ Wouldst thou me ? ”

Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noon-tide bee :

“ Shall I nestle near thy side ?

Wouldst thou me ? ”—And I replied :

No, not thee !

Death will come when thou art dead,

Soon, too soon !

Sleep will come when thou art fled.

Of neither would I ask the boon

I ask of thee, beloved Night—

Swift be thine approaching flight,

Come soon, soon !

Percy Bysshe Shelley

A LAMENT

O WORLD ! O life ! O time !

On whose last steps I climb,

Trembling at that where I had stood before ;

When will return the glory of your prime ?

No more—O, never more !

Out of the day and night

A joy has taken flight :

Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight

No more—O, never more !

Percy Bysshe Shelley

THE GLORIES OF OUR BLOOD AND STATE

THE glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things ;
There is no armour against fate ;
Death lays his icy hand on kings :
Sceptre and Crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.
Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill :
But their strong nerves at last must yield ;
They tame but one another still :
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.
The garlands wither on your brow ;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds ;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds :
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb ;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

James Shirley

SLEEP

COME, Sleep ; O Sleep ! the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low ;
•

With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw :
O make in me those civil wars to cease ;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind of light,
A rosy garland and a weary head ;
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Sir Philip Sidney

WITH HOW SAD STEPS

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the
skies !
How silently, and with how wan a face !
What ! may it be that even in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries ?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case :
I read it in thy looks ; thy languished grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.
Then, ev'n of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit ?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be ?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess ?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness ?

Sir Philip Sidney

MY TRUE LOVE HATH MY HEART

My true love hath my heart, and I have his,

By just exchange one for another given :

I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,

There never was a better bargain driven :

My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,

My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides :

He loves my heart, for once it was his own,

I cherish his because in me it bides :

My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

Sir Philip Sidney

ALL THE HILLS AND VALES

ALL the hills and vales along

Earth is bursting into song,

And the singers are the chaps

Who are going to die perhaps.

O sing, marching men,

Till the valleys ring again.

Give your gladness to earth's keeping,

So be glad, when you are sleeping.

Cast away regret and rue,

Think what you are marching to.

Little live, great pass.

Jesus Christ and Barabbas

Were found the same day.

This died, that went his way.

So sing with joyful breath.

For why, you are going to death.

Teeming earth will surely store

All the gladness that you pour.

Earth that never doubts nor fears,
Earth that knows of death, not tears,
Earth that bore with joyful ease
Hemlock for Socrates,
Earth that blossomed and was glad
'Neath the cross that Christ had,
Shall rejoice and blossom too
When the bullet reaches you.
Wherefore, men marching
On the road to death, sing !
Pour your gladness on earth's head,
So be merry, so be dead.

From the hills and valleys earth
Shouts back the sound of mirth,
Tramp of feet and lilt of song
Ringing all the road along.
All the music of their going,
Ringing swinging glad song-throwing,
Earth will echo still, when foot
Lies numb and voice mute.

On, marching men, on
To the gates of death with song.
Sow your gladness for earth's reaping,
So you may be glad, though sleeping,
Strew your gladness on earth's bed,
So be merry, so be dead.

C. H. Sorley

THE BURNING BABE

As I in hoary winter's night
Stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat,
Which made my heart to glow ;

And lifting up a fearful eye
To view what fire was near,
A pretty Babe all burning bright
Did in the air appear :
Who, scorched with excessive heat,
Such floods of tears did shed,
As though his floods should quench his flames,
Which with his tears were bred.
“ Alas ! ” quoth he, “ but newly born,
In fiery heats I fry,
Yet none approach to warm their hearts
Or feel my fire, but I.

My faultless breast the furnace is,
The fuel wounding thorns ;
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke,
The ashes shames and scorns ;
The fuel Justice layeth on,
And Mercy blows the coals ;
The metal in this furnace wrought
Are men’s defiled souls :
For which, as now on fire I am
To work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath,
To wash them in my blood ! ”
With this he vanished out of sight,
And swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I called unto my mind
That it was Christmas Day.

Robert Southwell

PROTHALAMION

CALM was the day, and through the trembling air
Sweet breathing Zephyrus did softly play,
A gentle spirit that lightly did delay
Hot Titan's beams which then did glister fair ;
When I (whom sullen care,
Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
In Prince's court, and expectation vain
Of idle hopes, which still do fly away
Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain)
Walked forth to ease my pain
Along the shore of silver-streaming Thames ;
Whose ruddy bank, the which his river hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorned with dainty gems
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours
Against the bridal day, which is not long :
Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song

There, in a meadow by the river's side,
A flock of Nymphs I chanced to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks, all loose untied,
As each had been a bride ;
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs, entrained curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,
And with fine fingers cropped full feateously
The tender stalks on high.
Of every sort which in that meadow grew
They gathered some : the violet, pallid blue,

The little daisy that at evening closes,
The virgin lily, and the primrose true,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegrooms' posies
Against the bridal day, which was not long :

Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two swans of goodly hue
Come softly swimming down along the Lee ;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see :
The snow, which doth the top of Pindus strew,
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear ;
Yet Leda was, they say, as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near :
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,
Seemed foul to them, and bade his billows spare
To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair,
And mar their beauties bright,
That shone as heaven's light
Against their bridal day, which was not long :

Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoons the Nymphs, which now had flowers their
fill,

Ran all in haste to see that silver brood,
As they came floating on the crystal flood ;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazed still,
Their wondering eyes to fill :
Them seemed they never saw a sight so fair,
Of fowls so lovely that they sure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair

Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team ;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed,
But rather angels, or of angels' breed ;
Yet were they bred of summer's heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array ;
So fresh they seemed as day,
Even as their bridal day, which was not long :
Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yield,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw,
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus' waters did they seem,
When, down along by pleasant Tempe's shore,
Scattered with flowers through Thessaly they stream,
That they appear, through lilies' plenteous store,
Like a bride's chamber floor.
Two of those Nymphs, meanwhile, two garlands
bound

Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crowned,
Whilst one did sing this lay,
Prepared against that day,
Against their bridal day, which was not long
(Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song !):—

“ Ye gentle birds, the world's fair ornament,
And heaven's glory, whom this happy hour
Doth lead unto your lovers' blissful bower,
Joy may you have, and gentle hearts' content

Of your love's couplement !
And let fair Venus, that is queen of love,
With her heart-quelling son upon you smile :
Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
For ever to assoil !
Let endless peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed plenty wait upon your board ;
And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
That fruitful issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joys redound
Upon your bridal day, which is not long :
Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song."

So ended she ; and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,
Which said, their bridal day should not be long :
And gentle Echo from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth those joyous birds did pass along
Adown the Lee, that to them murmured low,
As he would speak, but that he lacked a tongue,
Yet did by signs his glad affection show,
Making his stream run slow ;
And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Gan flock about these twain, that did excel
The rest, so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, enranged well.
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long :
Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song.

•

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source,
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of ancient fame !
There when they came, whereas those bricky towers
The which on 'Thames' broad aged back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the Templar Knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride ;
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gained gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord, which therein wont to dwell ;
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case ;
But ah ! here fits not well
Old woes, but joys, to tell
Against the bridal day, which is not long :
Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did
thunder,
And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear.
Fair branch of honour, flower of chivalry,
That fillest England with thy triumph's fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endless happiness of thine own name
That promiseth the same !
That, through thy prowess and victorious arms,
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms,
And great Elisa's glorious name may ring
Through all the world, filled with thy wide alarms,

Which some brave muse may sing
To ages following,
Upon the bridal day, which is not long :
 Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing,
Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hair
In the ocean billows he hath bathed fair,
Descended to the river's open viewing,
With a great train ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to be seen
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature,
Beseeming well the bower of any queen,
With gifts of wit and ornament of nature
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the twins of Jove they seemed in sight,
Which deck the bauldrick of the heavens bright :
They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
Received those two fair brides, their love's delight ;
Which at th' appointed tide,
Each one did make his bride
Against their bridal day, which is not long :
 Sweet Thames ! run softly, till I end my song.
 Edmund Spenser

A FAR PLACE

(To K. WIGRAM)

SHELTERED, when the rain blew over the hills it was,
Sunny all day when the days of summer were long,
Beyond all rumour of labouring towns it was,
But at dawn and evening its trees were noisy with
 song.

There were four elms on the southward lawn standing,
Their great trunks evenly set in a square
Of shadowed grass in spring pierced with crocuses,
And their tops met high in the empty air.

Where the morning rose the grey church was below
us,

If we stood by the porch we saw on either hand
The ground falling, the trees falling, and meadows,
A river, hamlets and spires : a chequered land,

A wide country where cloud shadows went chasing
Mile after mile, diminishing fast, until
They met the far blue downs ; but round the
corner

The western garden lay lonely under the hill.

And closed in the western garden, under the hillside,
Where silence was and the rest of the world was
gone,

We saw and took the curving year's munificence :
Changing from flower to flower the garden shone.

Early its walks were fringed with little rock-plants,
Sprays and tufts of blossom, white, yellow, and blue,
And all about were sprinkled stars of narcissus,
And swathes of tulips all over the garden grew.

White groups and pink, red, crimson, and lemon-
yellow,

And the yellow-and-red-streaked tulips once loved
by a boy ;

Red and yellow their stiff and varnished petals,
And the scent of them stings me still with a
youthful joy.

And in the season of perfect and frailest beauty,
Pear-blossom broke and the lilacs' waxen cones,
And a tranced laburnum trailing its veils of yellow
Tenderly drooped over the ivied stones.

The lilacs browned, a breath dried the laburnum,
The swollen peonies scattered the earth with blood,
And the rhododendrons shed their sumptuous
mantles,
And the marshalled irises unsceptred stood.

And the borders filled with daisies and pied sweet-
williams
And busy pansies ; and there as we gazed and
dreamed,
And breathed the swooning smell of the packed
carnations,
The present was always the crown of all : it seemed

Each month more beautiful sprang from a robe
discarded,
The year all effortless dropt the best away
And struck the heart with loveliness new, more
lavish ;
When the clambering rose had blown and died, by
day

The broad-leaved tapering many-shielded holly-
hocks
Stood like pillars and shone to the August sun
The glimmering cups of waking evening primroses
Filled the dusk now the scent of the rose was done.

A wall there was and a door to the rose-garden,
And out of that a gate to the orchard led,
And there was the last hedge, and the turf sloped
upward

Till the sky was cut by the hill's line overhead.

And thither at times we climbed, and far below us
That world that had made the world remote was
seen,

Small, a huddle of russet roofs and chimneys,
And its guard of elms like bushes against the
green :

One spot in the country, little and mild and homely,
The nearest house of a wide, populous plain. . . .
But down at evening under the stars and the
branches

In the whispering garden we lost the world again.

.

Whispering, faint, the garden under the hillside . . .
Under the stars. . . . Is it true that we lived there
long ?

Was it certainly so ? Did ever we know that
dwelling,

Breathe that night, and hear in the night that song ?

J. C. Squire

THE SNARE

I HEAR a sudden cry of pain !

There is a rabbit in a snare :

Now I hear the cry again,

But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
He is calling out for aid ;
Crying on the frightened air,
Making everything afraid.

Making everything afraid,
Wrinkling up his little face,
As he cries again for aid ;
And I cannot find the place !

And I cannot find the place
Where his paw is in the snare :
Little one ! Oh, little one !
I am searching everywhere.

James Stephens

IN THE POPPY FIELD

MAD Patsy said, he said to me,
That every morning he could see
An angel walking on the sky ;
Across the sunny skies of morn
He threw great handfuls far and nigh
Of poppy seed among the corn ;
And then, he said, the angels run
To see the poppies in the sun.

A poppy is a devil weed,
I said to him—he disagreed ;
He said the devil had no hand
In spreading flowers tall and fair
Through corn and rye and meadowland,
By garth and barrow everywhere :
The devil has not any flower,
But only money in his power.

And then he stretched out in the sun
And rolled upon his back for fun :
He kicked his legs and roared for joy
Because the sun was shining down,
He said he was a little boy
And would not work for any clown :
He ran and laughed behind a bee,
And danced for very ecstasy.

James Stephens

THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

*A naked house, a naked moor,
A shivering pool before the door,
A garden bare of flowers and fruit
And poplars at the garden foot :
Such is the place that I live in,
Bleak without and bare within.*

Yet shall your ragged moor receive
The incomparable pomp of eve,
And the cold glories of the dawn
Behind your shivering trees be drawn ;
And when the wind from place to place
Doth the unmoored cloud-galleons chase,
Your garden gloom and gleam again,
With leaping sun, with glancing rain.
Here shall the wizard moon ascend
The heavens, in the crimson end
Of day's declining splendour ; here
The army of the stars appear.
The neighbour hollows dry or wet,
Spring shall with tender flowers beset ;
And oft the morning muser see
Larks rising from the broomy lea

And every fairy wheel and thread
Of cobweb dew-bediamonded.
When daisies go, shall winter time
Silver the simple grass with rime ;
Autumnal frosts enchant the pool
And make the cart-ruts beautiful ;
And when snow-bright the moor expands,
How shall your children clap their hands !
To make this earth our hermitage,
A cheerful and a changeful page,
God's bright and intricate device
Of days and seasons doth suffice.

Robert Louis Stevenson

IN THE HIGHLANDS

IN the highlands, in the country places,
Where the old plain men have rosy faces,
And the young fair maidens
Quiet eyes ;
Where essential silence chills and blesses,
And for ever in the hill-recesses
Her more lovely music
Broods and dies——

O to mount again where erst I haunted ;
Where the old red hills are bird-enchanted,
And the low green meadows
Bright with sward ;
And when even dies, the million-tinted,
And the night has come, and planets glinted,
Lo, the valley hollow
Lamp bestarr'd !

O to dream, O to awake and wander
 There, and with delight to take and render,
 Through the trance of silence,
 Quiet breath !

Lo ! for there, among the flowers and grasses,
 Only the mightier movement sounds and passes
 Only winds and rivers,
 Life and death.

Robert Louis Stevenson

IN MEMORIAM F. A. S.

YET, O stricken heart, remember, O remember
 How of human days he lived the better part.
 April came to bloom and never dim December
 Breathed its killing chills upon the head or heart.

Doomed to know not Winter, only Spring, a being
 Trod the flowery April blithely for a while,
 Took his fill of music, joy of thought and seeing,
 Came and stayed and went, nor ever ceased to
 smile.

Came and stayed and went, and now when all is
 finished,
 You alone have crossed the melancholy stream,
 Yours the pang, but his, O his, the undiminished
 Undecaying gladness, undeparted dream.

All that life contains of torture, toil, and treason,
 Shame, dishonour, death, to him were but a name.
 Here, a boy, he dwelt through all the singing season,
 And ere the day of sorrow departed as he came.

Robert Louis Stevenson

THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness ;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face ;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not ; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain :—
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake ;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in !

Robert Louis Stevenson

THE DESCENDING STAR

THE infinite shining heavens
Rose and I saw in the night
Uncountable angel stars
Showering sorrow and light.
I saw them distant as heaven,
Dumb and shining and dead,
And the idle stars of the night
Were dearer to me than bread.
Night after night in my sorrow
The stars stood over the sea,
Till lo ! I looked in the dusk
And a star had come down to me.

Robert Louis Stevenson

TO S. R. CROCKETT

BLOWS the wind to-day, and the sun and the rain
are flying,

BLOWS the wind on the moors to-day and now,
Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups
are crying,

My heart remembers how !

Grey recumbent tombs of the dead in desert places,
Standing stones on the vacant wine-red moor,
Hills of sheep, and the homes of the silent vanished
races,

And winds, austere and pure :

Be it granted me to behold you again in dying,

Hills of home ! and to hear again the call ;

Hear about the graves of the martyrs the peewees
crying,

And hear no more at all.

Robert Louis Stevenson

REQUIEM

UNDER the wide and starry sky,

Dig the grave and let me lie.

Glad did I live and gladly die,

And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me :

Here he lies where he longed to be ;

Home is the sailor, home from sea,

And the hunter home from the hill.

Robert Louis Stevenson

WHY SO PALE AND WAN, FOND LOVER?

WHY so pale and wan, fond lover ?

Prithee, why so pale ?

Will, when looking well can't move her,

Looking ill prevail ?

Prithee, why so pale ?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner ?

Prithee, why so mute ?

Will, when speaking well can't win her,

Saying nothing do't ?

Prithee, why so mute ?

Quit, quit, for shame ! this will not move,

This cannot take her ;

If of herself she will not love,

Nothing can make her :

The Devil take her !

Sir John Suckling

CHORUS FROM ATALANTA

BEFORE the beginning of years

There came to the making of man

Time, with a gift of tears ;

Grief, with a glass that ran ;

Pleasure, with pain for leaven ;

Summer, with flowers that fell ;

Remembrance fallen from heaven,

And madness risen from hell ;

Strength without hands to smite ;

Love that endures for a breath ;

Night, the shadow of light,

• And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand
Fire, and the falling of tears,
And a measure of sliding sand
From under the feet of the years ;
And froth and drift of the sea ;
And dust of the labouring earth ;
And bodies of things to be
In the houses of death and of birth ;
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
And fashioned with loathing and love,
With life before and after,
And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
That his strength might endure for a span,
With travail and heavy sorrow,
The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south
They gathered as unto strife ;
They breathed upon his mouth,
They filled his body with life ;
Eyesight and speech they wrought
For the veils of the soul therein,
A time for labour and thought,
A time to serve and to sin ;
They gave him light in his ways,
And love, and a space for delight,
And beauty, and length of days,
And night, and sleep in the night.
His speech is a burning fire ;
With his lips he travailleth ;
In his heart is a blind desire,
In his eyes foreknowledge of death ; ,

He weaves, and is clothed with derision ;
Sows, and he shall not reap ;
His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

A. C. Swinburne

A FORSAKEN GARDEN

In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
The steep square slope of the blossomless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves
of its roses

Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
To the low last edge of the long lone land.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's
hand ?

So long have the grey bare walks lain guestless,
Through branches and briars if a man make way,
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled,
That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled
Of all but the thorns that are touched not of time.
The thorns he spares when the rose is taken ;
The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
These remain.

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that falls not ;
As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are
dry ;
From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale
calls not,
Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.
Over the meadows that blossom and wither
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song ;
Only the sun and the rain come hither
All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels
In a round where life seems barren as death.
Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,
Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping
Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look
thither,"
Did he whisper ? "look forth from the flowers to
the sea ;
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms
wither,
And men that love lightly may die—but we ?"
And the same wind sang and the same waves whit-
ened,
And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had
lightened,
Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went
whither ?

And were one to the end—but what end who
knows ?

Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,
As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.
Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love
them ?

What love was ever as deep as a grave ?
They are loveless now as the grass above them
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
In the air now soft with a summer to be.
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons here-
after
Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or
weep,
When as they that are free now of weeping and
laughter,
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again for ever :

Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise up
never,

Who have left nought living to ravage and rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground grow-
ing,

While the sun and the rain live, these shall be :
Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides
humble

The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand
spread,

As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
Death lies dead.

A. C. Swinburne

SLEEP ETERNAL

WE are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure ;
To-day will die to-morrow ;
Time stoops to no man's lure ;
And love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives for ever ;
That dead men rise up never ;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken
Nor any change of light :
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight :
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal ;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

A. C. Swinburne

THE SPLENDOUR FALLS ON CASTLE WALLS

THE splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story :
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going !
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river :
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

Lord Tennyson

O SWALLOW, SWALLOW, FLYING, FLYING
SOUTH

O SWALLOW, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

O were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown :
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

O tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her
mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

Lord Tennyson

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

Lord Tennyson

THERE ROLLS THE DEEP

THERE rolls the deep where grew the tree.

O earth, what changes hast thou seen !

There where the long street roars, hath been
The stillness of the central sea.

LORD TENNYSON

The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands ;
They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,
And dream my dream, and hold it true ;
For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
I cannot think the thing farewell.

Lord Tennyson

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

BREAK, break, break,
On thy cold grey stones, O Sea !
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play !
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill ;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Lord Tennyson

SONG OF THE LOTOS-EATERS

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes ;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful
 skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness ?
All things have rest : why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown :
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm ;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
" There is no joy but calm ! "—
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of
 things ?

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,

Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life ; ah, why
Should life all labour be ?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last ?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil ? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence ; ripen, fall and cease :
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful
ease.

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream !
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the
height ;

To hear each other's whisper'd speech ;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach, ;
And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy ;
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass !

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears : but all hath suffer'd change ;
For surely now our household hearths are cold :
Our sons inherit us : our looks are strange :
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle ?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile :
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There *is* confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out with many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eyelids still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,

(To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
His waters from the purple hill—
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—
To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine !
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the
pine.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :
The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone :
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-
dust is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the
surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-
fountains in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal
mind,

In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of man-
kind.

For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are
hurl'd

Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are
lightly curl'd

Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleam-
ing world :

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted
lands,

Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring
 deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns and sinking
 ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful
 song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of
 wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are
 strong ;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the
 soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring
 toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine, and
 oil ;
Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys
 dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the
 shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave
 and oar ;
O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander
 more.

Lord Tennyson

TITHONUS

THE woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
The vapours weep their burthen to the ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath, . . .
And after many a summer dies the swan.

Me only cruel immortality
Consumes : I wither slowly in thine arms.
Here at the quiet limit of the world,
A white-haired shadow roaming like a dream
The ever-silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a man—
So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he seemed
To his great heart none other than a God !
I asked thee, " Give me immortality."
Then didst thou grant my asking with a smile,
Like wealthy men who care not how they give.
But thy strong Hours indignant worked their wills,
And beat me down and marred and wasted me,
And though they could not end me, left me maimed
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, though even now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with tears
To hear me ? Let me go : take back thy gift :
Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most meet for all ?

A soft air fans the cloud apart ; there comes
A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.
Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals
From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders
pure,

And bosom beating with a heart renewed.
Thy cheek begins to redden through the gloom,
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,
Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team
Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,
And shake the darkness from their loosened manes,
And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo ! ever thus thou growest beautiful
In silence, then before thine answer given
Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,
And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be true ?
“ The Gods themselves cannot recall their gifts.”

Ay me ! ay me ! with what another heart
In days far-off, and with what other eyes
I used to watch—if I be he that watched—
The lucid outline forming round thee ; saw
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings ;
Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my
blood

Glow with the glow that slowly crimsoned all
Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-warm
With kisses balmier than half-opening buds
Of April, and could hear the lips that kissed
Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,
Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,
While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East :
How can my nature longer mix with thine ?
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold

Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam
Floats up from those dim fields about the homes
Of happy men that have the power to die,
And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
Release me, and restore me to the ground ;
Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my grave ;
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn ;
I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

Lord Tennyson

ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel : I will drink
Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known ; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all ;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met ;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose magic fades
For ever and for ever when I move.

How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains : but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things ; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port ; the vessel puffs her sail :
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought
with me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old ;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ;
Death closes all : but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :

The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the
 deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we are ;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

Lord Tennyson

EARLY SPRING

I

ONCE more the Heavenly Power
 Makes all things new,
And domes the red-plow'd hills
 With loving blue ;
The blackbirds have their wills,
 The throstles too.

II

Opens a door in Heaven ;
 From skies of glass
A Jacob's ladder falls
 On greening grass,
And o'er the mountain-walls
 Young angels pass.

III

Before them fleets the shower,
And burst the buds,
And shine the level lands,
And flash the floods ;
The stars are from their hands
Flung thro' the woods.

IV

The woods with living airs
How softly fann'd,
Light airs from where the deep,
All down the sand,
Is breathing in his sleep,
Heard by the land.

V

O follow, leaping blood,
The season's lure !
O heart, look down and up
Serene, secure,
Warm as the crocus cup,
Like snowdrops pure !

VI

Past, Future glimpse and fade
Thro' some slight spell,
A gleam from yonder vale,
Some far blue fell,
And sympathies, how frail,
In sound and smell !

VII

Till at thy chuckled note,
Thou twinkling bird,
The fairy fancies range,
And, lightly stirr'd,
Ring little bells of change
From word to word.

VIII

For now the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new,
And thaws the cold, and fills
The flower with dew ;
The blackbirds have their wills,
The poets too.

Lord Tennyson

CROSSING THE BAR

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me !
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark !
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark :

for tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

Lord Tennyson

IN NO STRANGE LAND

(*"The Kingdom of God is within you"*)

O WORLD invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee !

Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of thee there ?

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars !—
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places ;—
Turn but a stone, and start a wing !
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
Cry ;—and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
Cry,—clinging Heaven by the hems :
And lo, Christ walking on the water,
Not of Gennesareth, but Thames !

Francis Thompson

DAISY

WHERE the thistle lifts a purple crown
Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on the windy hill—
O the breath of the distant surf!—

The hills look over on the South,
And southward dreams the sea ;
And, with the sea-breeze hand in hand,
Came innocence and she.

Where 'mid the gorse the raspberry
Red for the gatherer springs,
Two children did we stray and talk
Wise, idle, childish things.

She listen'd with big-lipp'd surprise,
Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine :
Her skin was like a grape, whose veins
Run snow instead of wine.

She knew not those sweet words she spake,
Nor knew her own sweet way ;
But there's never a bird so sweet a song
Throng'd in whose throat that day !

O, there were flowers in Storrington
On the turf and on the spray ;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
Was the Daisy-flower that day !

Her beauty smooth'd earth's furrow'd face !
She gave me tokens three :—
A look, a word of her winsome mouth,
And a wild raspberry.

A berry red, a guileless look,
A still word,—strings of sand !
And yet they made my wild, wild heart
Fly down to her little hand.

For, standing artless as the air,
And candid as the skies,
She took the berries with her hand,
And the love with her sweet eyes.

The fairest things have fleetest end :
Their scent survives their close ;
But the rose's scent is bitterness
To him that loved the rose !

She looked a little wistfully,
Then went her sunshine way :—
The sea's eye had a mist on it,
And the leaves fell from the day.

She went her unremembering way,
She went, and left in me
The pang of all the partings gone
• And partings yet to be.

She left me marvelling why my soul
Was sad that she was glad ;
At all the sadness in the sweet,
The sweetness in the sad.

Still, still I seem'd to see her, still
Look up with soft replies,
And take the berries with her hand,
And the love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
That is not paid with moan ;
For we are born in other's pain,
And perish in our own.

Francis Thompson

THE SALUTATION

THESE little limbs,
These eyes and hands which here I find,
These rosy cheeks wherewith my life begins,
Where have ye been ? Behind
What curtain were ye from me hid so long,
Where was, in what abyss, my speaking tongue ?

When silent I
So many thousand, thousand years
Beneath the dust did in a chaos lie,
How could I smile or tears,
Or lips or hands or eyes or ears perceive ?
Welcome ye treasures which I now receive.

I that so long
Was nothing from eternity,
Did little think such joys as ear or tongue
To celebrate or see :
Such sounds to hear, such hands to feel, such feet
Beneath the skies on such a ground to meet.

New burnished joys
Which yellow gold and pearls excel !
Such sacred treasures are the limbs in boys,
In which a soul doth dwell ;
Their organized joints and azure veins
More wealth include than all the world contains.

From dust I rise,
And out of nothing now awake,
These brighter regions which now salute mine eyes,
A gift from God I take.
The earth, the seas, the light, the day, the skies,
The sun and stars are mine ; if those I prize.

Long time before
I in my mother's womb was born,
A God preparing did this glorious store,
The world for me adorn :
Into this Eden so divine and fair,
So wide and bright, I come, His son and heir.

A stranger here
Strange things doth meet, strange glories see ;
Strange treasures lodged in this fair world appear,
Strange all and new to me ;
But that they mine should be, who nothing was,
That strangest is of all, yet brought to pass.

Thomas Traherne

THE WAYS OF WISDOM

THESE sweeter far than lilies are,
No roses may with these compare :
 How these excell
 No tongue can tell,
Which he that well and truly knows
 With praise and joy he goes !
How great and happy's he that knows his ways
 To be divine and heavenly joys ;
To whom each city is more brave
Than walls of pearl, and streets which gold doth
 pave :
 Whose open eyes
 Behold the skies ;
Who loves their wealth and beauty more
 Than kings love golden ore !

Who sees the heavenly ancient ways
Of God the Lord, with joy and praise
 More than the skies,
 With open eyes
Doth prize them all ; yea, more than gems,
 And regal diadems ;
That more esteemeth mountains, as they are,
 Than if they gold and silver were :
To whom the sun more pleasure brings,
Than crowns and thrones and palaces to kings ;
 That knows his ways
 To be the joys
And way of God. These things who knows
 With joy and praise he goes.

Thomas Traherne

ROMANCE

WHEN I was but thirteen or so

I went into a golden land,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Took me by the hand.

My father died, my brother too,
They passed like fleeting dreams,
I stood where Popocatapetl
In the sunlight gleams.

I dimly heard the master's voice
And boys far-off at play,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had stolen me away.

I walked in a great golden dream
To and fro from school—
Shining Popocatapetl
The dusty streets did rule.

I walked home with a gold dark boy,
And never a word I'd say,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had taken my speech away :

I gazed entranced upon his face
Fairer than any flower—
O shining Popocatapetl
It was thy magic hour :

The houses, people, traffic seemed
Thin fading dreams by day,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
They had stolen my soul away !

W. J. Turner

TIMBER

SURE thou didst flourish once ! and many springs,
Many bright mornings, much dew, many showers,
Passed o'er thy head ; many light hearts and wings,
Which now are dead, lodged in thy living bowers.

And still a new succession sings and flies ;
Fresh groves grow up, and their green branches
shoot

Towards the old and still enduring skies,
While the low violet thrives at their root.

Henry Vaughan

THE RETREAT

HAPPY those early days, when I
Shined in my Angel infancy !
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white celestial thought :
When yet I had not walk'd above
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back—at that short space—
Could see a glimpse of His bright face :
When on some gilded cloud, or flow'r,
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity :
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My Conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track !
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train ;
From whence th' enlighten'd spirit sees
That shady City of Palm-trees.
But ah ! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way !
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move ;
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

Henry Vaughan

CHILDHOOD

I CANNOT reach it ; and my striving eye
Dazzles at it, as at eternity.

Were now that chronicle alive,
Those white designs which children drive,
And the thoughts of each harmless hour,
With their content, too, in my power,
Quickly would I make my path even,
And by mere playing go to heaven.

Why should men love
A wolf, more than a lamb or dove ?
Or choose hell-fire or brimstone streams,
Before bright stars and God's own beams ?
Who kisseth thorns will hurt his face,
But flowers do both refresh and grace ;
And sweetly living (fie on men !)
Are, when dead, medicinal then,

If seeing much should make staid eyes,
And long experience should make wise ;
Since all that age doth teach is ill,
Why should I not love childhood still ?
Why, if I see a rock or shelf,
Shall I from thence cast down myself ?
Or by complying with the world,
From the same precipice be hurled ?
Those obscure observations are but foul,
Which make me wise to lose my soul.

Dear harmless age ! the short, swift span
Where weeping Virtue parts with man ;
Where love without lust dwells, and bends
What way we please, without self-ends.

And yet the practice worldlings call
Business and weighty action all,
Checking the poor child for his play,
But gravely cast themselves away.

An age of mysteries ! which he
Must live twice that would God's face see ;
Which Angels guard, and with it play ;
Angels ! which foul men drive away.

How do I study then and scan
Thee more than e'er I studied man,
And only see through a long night
Thy edges and thy bordering light !
O for thy centre and midday !
For sure that is the narrow way.

Henry Vaughan

MAN

WEIGHING the steadfastness and state
Of some mean things which here below reside,
Where birds, like watchful clocks, the noiseless date
And intercourse of times divide,
Where bees at night get home and hive, and flowers,
Early as well as late,
Rise with the sun, and set in the same bowers ;

I would, said I, my God would give
The staidness of these things to man ! for these
To His divine appointments ever cleave,
And no new business breaks their peace ;
The birds nor sow nor reap, yet sup and dine,
The flowers without clothes live,
Yet Solomon was never dressed so fine.

Man hath still either toys, or care ;
He hath no root, nor to one place is tied,
But ever restless and irregular
About this earth doth run and ride ;
He knows he hath a home, but scarce knows where ;
He says it is so far,
That he hath quite forgot how to go there.

He knocks at all doors, strays and roams ;
Nay, hath not so much wit as some stones have,
Which in the darkest nights point to their homes
By some hid sense their Maker gave ;
Man is the shuttle, to whose winding quest
And passage through these looms
God ordered motion, but ordained no rest.

Henry Vaughan

THE MORNING-WATCH

O joys ! infinite sweetness ! with what flowers
And shoots of glory, my soul breaks and buds !

All the long hours
Of night and rest,
Through the still shrouds
Of sleep and clouds,

This dew fell on my breast ;

O how it bloods,

And spirits all my earth ! hark ! in what rings
And hymning circulations the quick world

Awakes and sings !

The rising winds,

And falling springs,

Birds, beasts, all things

Adore Him in their kinds ;

Thus all is hurled

In sacred hymns and order ; the great chime
And symphony of Nature. Prayer is

The world in tune,

A spirit voice

And vocal joys

Whose echo is heaven's bliss.

O let me climb

When I lie down ! The pious soul by night

Is like a clouded star, whose beams, though said

To shed their light

Under some cloud,

Yet are above,

And shine and move

Beyond that misty shroud.

So in my bed,

That curtained grave, though sleep, like ashes, hide
My lamp and life, both shall in Thee abide.

Henry Vaughan

THE SEED GROWING SECRETLY

If this world's friends might see but once
What some poor man may often feel,
Glory, and gold, and crowns, and thrones,
They would soon quit, and learn to kneel.

My dew, my dew ! my early love,
My soul's bright food, thy absence kills !
Hover not long, eternal Dove !
Life without thee is loose, and spills.

Something I had, which long ago
Did learn to suck and sip and taste ;
But now grown sickly, sad and slow,
Doth fret and wrangle, pine and waste.

O spread thy sacred wings, and shake
One living drop ! one drop life keeps !
If pious griefs heaven's joys awake,
O fill his bottle ! Thy child weeps.

Slowly and sadly doth he grow,
And soon as left shrinks back to ill ;
O feed that life, which makes him blow
And spread and open to thy will !

For thy eternal living wells
None stained or withered shall come near :
A fresh, immortal green there dwells,
And spotless white is all the wear.

Dear, secret greenness ! nursed below
Tempests and winds, and winter-nights,
Vex not, that but one sees thee grow :
That One made all these lesser lights.

Both sun and stars met in one crown,
 And moons, + stars should hide their heads,
 Let glory be although full, would get them down.
 Are all too their bait, whose minds
 Though hawks high for a low cell :
 The poor can prey through storms and winds,
 Of bee in her hive must dwell.
 Glory, the crowd's cheap tinsel still
 To what most takes them, 'tis a drudge ;
 And they too oft take good for ill,
 And thriving vice for virtue judge.
 What needs a conscience, calm and upright
 Within itself, and outward test ?
 Who breaks his glass to take more light
 Makes way for storms into his rest.
 Then bless thy secret growth, nor catch
 At noise, but thrive unseen and dumb ;
 Keep clean, bear fruit, earn life, and watch
 Till the white-wingéd Reapers come !

Henry Vaughan

THE DWELLING-PLACE

11

WHAT happy, secret fountain,
 Fair shade, or mountain,
 Whose undiscovered virgin glory
 Boasts it this day, though not in story,
 Was then thy dwelling ? did some cloud,
 Fixed to a tent, descend and shroud
 My distressed Lord ? or did a star,
 Beckoned by thee, though high and far,

In sparkling smiles haste gladly down
To lodge light, and increase her own ?
My dear, dear God ! I do not know
What lodged thee then, nor where, nor how ;
But I am sure thou dost now come
Oft to a narrow, homely room,
Where thou too hast but the least part :
My God, I mean my sinful heart.

Henry Vaughan

WITHIN THE VEIL

THEY are all gone into the world of light !

And I alone sit lingering here ;

Their very memory is fair and bright,

And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,

Like stars upon some gloomy grove,

Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest,

After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,

Whose light doth trample on my days :

My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,

Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope ! and high Humility,

High as the heavens above !

These are your walks, and you have show'd them
me,

To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death ! the jewel of the just,

Shining no where, but in the dark ;

What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,

Could man outlook that mark !

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest, may
know

At first sight, if the bird be flown ;
But what fair well or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul, when man doth sleep ;
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted
themes,
And into glory peep.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee !
Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Henry Vaughan

PEACE

My Soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a winged sentry
All skilful in the wars :
There above noise, and danger,
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious Friend,
And—O my Soul, awake !—
Did in pure love descend
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of Peace,
The Rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.

Leave then thy foolish ranges,
For none can thee secure
But One, Who never changes,
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

Henry Vaughan

THE WORLD

I saw Eternity the other night,
Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright :—
And round beneath it, Time, in hours, days, years,
Driven by the spheres,
Like a vast shadow moved ; in which the World
And all her train were hurled.
Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
And sing and weep, soared up into the Ring ;
But most would use no wing.
O fools, said I, thus to prefer dark night
Before true light !
To live in grotts and caves and hate the day
Because it shews the way,
The way, which from this dead and dark abode
Leads up to God ;
A way, where you might tread the Sun and be
More bright than he !
But as I did their madness so discuss
One whispered thus :
This Ring the Bridegroom did for none provide
But for His bride.

Henry Vaughan

THE REVIVAL

UNFOLD ! unfold ! Take in His light,
Who makes thy cares more short than night.
The joys which with His day-star rise
He deals to all but drowsy eyes ;
And, what the men of this world miss,
Some drops and dews of future bliss.

Hark ! how His winds have changed their note,
And with warm whispers call thee out !
The frosts are past, the storms are gone,
And backward life at last comes on ;
The lofty groves in express joys
Reply unto the turtle's voice ;
And here in dust and dirt, O here,
The lilies of His love appear !

Henry Vaughan

GO, LOVELY ROSE

Go, lovely Rose—
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her, that's young
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That, hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired :
 Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die—that she
The common fate of all things rare
 May read in thee :
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

Edmund Waller

OLD AGE

THE seas are quiet when the winds give o'er ;
So calm are we when passions are no more.
For then we know how vain it was to boast,
Of fleeting things, so certain to be lost.
Clouds of affection from our younger eyes
Conceal that emptiness which age descries.

The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that time hath
 made :

Stronger by weakness, wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home :
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

Edmund Waller

MAN'S MORTALITY

Like as the damask rose you see,
Or like the blossom on the tree,
Or like the dainty flower in May,
Or like the morning of the day,
Or like the sun, or like the shade,
Or like the gourd which Jonas had—
E'en such is man : whose thread is spun,
Drawn out and cut, and so is done.
The rose withers, the blossom blasteth ;
The flower fades, the morning hasteth ;
The sun sets, the shadow flies ;
The gourd consumes ; and man he dies !

Like to the grass that's newly sprung,
Or like a tale that's new begun,
Or like the bird that's here to-day,
Or like the pearlèd dew of May,
Or like an hour, or like a span,
Or like the singing of a swan—
E'en such is man ; who lives by breath,
Is here, now there, in life, and death.
The grass withers, the tale is ended ;
The bird is flown, the dew's ascended ;
The hour is short, the span is long ;
The swan's near death ; man's life is done !

Like to the bubble in the brook,
Or, in a glass, much like a look ;
Or like a shuttle in weaver's hand,
Or like the writing on the sand,
Or like a thought, or like a dream,
Or like the gliding of the stream :

E'en such is man, who lives by breath,
Is here, now there, in life, and death ;
The bubble's cut, the look's forgot ;
The shuttle's flung, the writing's blot ;
The thought is past, the dream is gone,
The water glides ; man's life is done.

Like to an arrow from a bow,
Or like swift course of watery flow,
Or like the time 'twixt flood and ebb,
Or like the spider's tender web ;
Or like a race, or like a goal,
Or like the dealing of a dole ;
E'en such is man, whose brittle state
Is always subject unto fate :
The arrow's shot, the flood soon spent,
The time no time, the web soon rent,
The race soon run, the goal soon won,
The dole soon dealt ; man's life is done.

Like to the lightning from the sky,
Or like a post that quick doth hie,
Or like a quaver in short-song,
Or like a journey three days' long :
Or like the snow when summer's come ;
Or like the pear, or like the plum ;
E'en such is man, who keeps up sorrow,
Lives but this day and dies to-morrow.
The lightning's past, the post must go,
The song is short, the journey's so,
The pear doth rot, the plum doth fall
The snow dissolves, and so must all.

Simon Wastell

IN LALEHAM CHURCHYARD

(August 18, 1890)

'Twas at this season, year by year,
The singer who lies songless here
Was wont to woo a less austere,
Less deep repose,

Where Rotha to Winandermere
Unresting flows,—

Flows through a land where torrents call
To far-off torrents as they fall,
And mountains in their cloudy pall
Keep ghostly state,
And Nature makes majestic
Man's lowliest fate.

There, 'mid the August glow, still came
He of the twice-illustrious name,
The loud impertinence of fame
Not loth to flee—
Not loth with brooks and fells to claim
Fraternity.

Linked with his happy youthful lot,
Is Loughrigg, then, at last forgot?
Nor silent peak nor dalesman's cot
Looks on his grave.

Lulled by the Thames he sleeps, and not
By Rotha's wave.

'Tis fittest thus! for though with skill
He sang of beck and tarn and ghyll,
The deep, authentic mountain-thrill
Ne'er shook his page!
Somewhat of worldling mingled still
With bard and sage.

And 'twere less meet for him to lie
Guarded by summits lone and high
That traffic with the eternal sky
 And hear, unawed,
The everlasting fingers ply
 The loom of God,

Than, in this hamlet of the plain,
A less sublime repose to gain,
Where Nature, genial and urbane,
 To man defers,
Yielding to us the right to reign,
 Which yet is hers.

And nigh to where his bones abide,
The Thames with its unruffled tide
Seems like his genius typified,—
 Its strength, its grace,
Its lucid gleam, its sober pride,
 Its tranquil pace.

But ah! not his the eventual fate
Which doth the journeying wave await—
Doomed to resign its limpid state
 And quickly grow
Turbid as passion, dark as hate,
 And wide as woe.

Rather, it may be, over-much
He shunned the common stain and smutch,
From soilure of ignoble touch
 Too grandly free,
Too loftily secure in such
 Cold purity.

But he preserved from chance control
The fortress of his 'stabilisht soul ;
In all things sought to see the Whole ;
 Brooked no disguise ;
And set his heart upon the goal,
 Not on the prize ;

And with those few he shall survive
Who seem not to compete or strive,
Yet with the foremost still arrive,
 Prevailing still :
The Elect with whom the stars connive
 To work their will.

Sir William Watson

A DIRGE

CALL for the robin-redbreast and the wren,
Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.
Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And (when gay tombs are robb'd) sustain no harm ;
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men,
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.

John Webster

MYSTERIOUS NIGHT

MYSTERIOUS Night ! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this goodly frame.
This glorious canopy of light and blue ?
But through a curtain of translucent dew,

Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
 Hesperus with the host of heaven came :
 And lo ! Creation broadened to man's view !
 Who could have guessed such darkness lay concealed

Within thy beams, O Sun ! or who divined,
 When bud and flower and insect lay revealed,
 Thou to such countless worlds hadst made us
 blind ?

Why should we then shun Death with anxious
 strife ?

If Light conceals so much, wherefore not Life ?

Joseph Blanco White

THE HARDY LOVER

SHALL I, wasting in despair,
 Die because a woman's fair ?
 Or make pale my cheeks with care
 'Cause another's rosy are ?
 Be she fairer than the day,
 Or the flowery meads in May—
 If she think not well of me,
 What care I how fair she be ?

Shall my silly heart be pined
 'Cause I see a woman kind ?
 Or a well disposèd nature
 Joinèd with a lovely feature ?
 Be she mecker, kinder, than
 Turtle-dove or pelican,
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how kind she be ?

Shall a woman's virtues move
Me to perish for her love ?
Or her well-deservings known
Make me quite forget my own ?
Be she with that goodness blest
Which may merit name of Best ;

 If she be not such to me,
 What care I how good she be ?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
Shall I play the fool and die ?
Those that bear a noble mind,
Where they want of riches find,
Think what with them they would do
Who without them dare to woo ;

 And unless that mind I see,
 What care I though great she be ?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair ;
If she love me, this believe,
I will die ere she shall grieve ;
If she slight me when I woo,
I can scorn and let her go ;

 For if she be not for me,
 What care I for whom she be ?

George Wither

THE LULLABY

SLEEP, baby, sleep ! What ails my dear,
 What ails my darling thus to cry ?
Be still, my child, and lend thine ear,
 To hear me sing thy lullaby.
My pretty lamb, forbear to weep ;
Be still, my dear ; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou blessèd soul, what can'st thou fear,
 What thing to thee can mischief do ?
 Thy God is now thy father dear,
 His holy Spouse thy mother too.
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

While thus thy lullaby I sing,
 For thee great blessings ripening be ;
 Thine Elder Brother is a king,
 And hath a kingdom bought for thee.
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;
 Be still my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

A little infant once was He ;
 And strength in weakness then was laid
 Upon His Virgin-Mother's knee,
 That power to thee might be conveyed.
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

The King of kings, when He was born,
 Had not so much for outward ease ;
 By Him such dressings were not worn,
 Nor such-like swaddling clothes as these.
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Within a manger lodged thy Lord,
 Where oxen lay and asses fed ;
 Warm rooms we do to thee afford,
 An easy cradle or a bed.
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou hast yet more to perfect this,
 A promise and an earnest got
 Of gaining everlasting bliss,
 Though thou, my babe, perceiv'st it not.
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

George Wither

THE MARYGOLD

WHEN with a serious musing I, *William Wordsworth*
 The grateful and obsequious mary
 How duly, every morning, she displays
 Her open breast, when Titan spreads his rays
 How she observes him in his daily walk,
 Still bending tow'ards him her small slender stalk ;
 How, when he down declines, she droops and mourns,
 Bedewed, as 'twere with tears, till he returns ;
 And how she veils her flowers when he is gone,
 As if she scornèd to be lookèd on
 By an inferior eye ; or did contemn
 To wait upon a meaner light than him :
 —When this I meditate, methinks the flowers
 Have spirits far more generous than ours,
 And give us fair examples, to despise
 The servile fawning and idolatries
 Wherewith we court those earthly things below,
 Which merit not the service we bestow.

But O my God ! though grovelling I appear
 Upon the ground, and have a rooting here
 Which pulls me downward, yet in my desire
 To that which is above me I aspire ;
 And all my best affections I profess
 To Him that is the Sun of Righteousness.

Oh ! keep the morning of His incarnation,
 The burning noontide of His bitter passion,
 The night of His descending, and the height
 Of His ascension—ever in my sight !
 That, imitating Him in what I may,
 I never follow an inferior way.

George Wither

MY HEART LEAPS UP

Leaps up when I behold
 How in the sky :

Not that it when my life began
 Said it now I am a man ;
 Nor be it when I shall grow old,
 Or let me die !
 For I will be father of the Man :
 And I will wish my days to be
 Each by natural piety.

William Wordsworth

IN MARCH

Written at the foot of Brother's

The Cock is crowing,
 The stream is flowing,
 The small birds twitter,
 The lake doth glitter,
 The green field sleeps in the sun ;
 The oldest and youngest
 Are at work with the strongest ;
 The cattle are grazing,
 Their heads never raising ;
 There are forty feeding like one !

Like an army defeated
 The snow hath retreated,
 And now doth fare ill
 On the top of the bare hill ;
 The Ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon :
 There's joy in the mountains ;
 There's life in the fountains ;
 Small clouds are sailing,
 Blue sky prevailing ;
 The rain is over and gone.

William Wordsworth

WRITTE

I HEARD a tho
 While in a gro
 In that sweet
 Bring sad thou

To her fair wor
 The human sou
 And much it g
 What Man has

Through primro
 The periwinkle
 And 'tis my farm that every flower
 Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
 Their thoughts I cannot measure,—
 But the least motion which they made
 It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air ;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What Man has made of Man ?

William Wordsworth

LUCY

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye !
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and, O,
The difference to me !

William Wordsworth

NATURE'S CHILD

THREE years she grew in sun and shower ;
Then Nature said, " A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown :
This Child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
• A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse ; and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as, in fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And her's shall be the breathing balme,
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; and the willow leaf
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the breeze
Grace that shall mould the motions of
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her head
In many a secret place,
Where rivers of silence run,
And beauty's form of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her soul.

"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell ;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
 How soon my Lucy's race was run !
 She died, and left to me
 This heath, this calm and quiet scene ;
 The memory of what has been,
 And never more will be.

William Wordsworth

THE SINKING MOON

STRANGE fits of passion have I known :
 And I will dare to tell,
 But in the Lover's ear alone,
 What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day
 Fresh as a rose things my
 I to her cottage bent my way,
 Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
 And over the wide lea ;
 A swift quickening pace my horse drew nigh
 I gave paths so dear to me.

Upon a bow we reached the orchard-plot ;
 To bear we climbed the hill,
 And, sinking moon to Lucy's cot
 Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
 Kind Nature's gentlest boon !
 And all the while my eyes I kept
 On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped :
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a Lover's head !

" O mercy ! " to myself I cried,
" If Lucy should be dead ! "

William Wordsworth

DEATH IN ABSENCE

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea ;
Nor, England ! till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time ; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire ;
And she I cherished turned her wh₄
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played ;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

William Wordsworth

DEAD

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;
I had no human fears :
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
She neither hears nor sees ;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

William Wordsworth

AMONG ALL LOVELY THINGS MY LOVE
HAD BEEN

AMONG all lovely things my Love had been ;
Had noted well the stars, all flowers that grew
About her home ; but she had never seen
A glow-worm, never one, and this I knew.

While riding near her home one stormy night
A single glow-worm did I chance to espy ;
I gave a fervent welcome to the sight,
And from my horse I leapt ; great joy had I.

Upon a leaf the glow-worm did I lay,
To bear it with me through the stormy night :
And, as before, it shone without dismay ;
Albeit putting forth a fainter light.

When to the dwelling of my Love I came,
I went into the orchard quietly ;
And left the glow-worm, blessing it by name,
Laid safely by itself, beneath a tree.

The whole next day I hoped, and hoped with fear ;
At night the glow-worm shone beneath the tree ;
I led my Lucy to the spot, " Look here,"
Oh ! joy it was for her, and joy for me !

William Wordsworth

TO A YOUNG LADY

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING LONG
WALKS IN THE COUNTRY

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail !
—There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbour and a hold ;
Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see
Thy own heart-stirring days, and be
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,
And treading among flowers of joy
Which at no season fade,
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,
Shalt show us how divine a thing
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh,
A melancholy slave ;
But an old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

William Wordsworth

TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer ! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering voice ?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear :
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring !
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery :

The same whom in my schoolboy days
I listened to ; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green ;
And thou wert still a hope, a love—
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet ;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird ! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place :
That is fit home for thee !

William Wordsworth

THE DAFFODILS

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay :
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :—
A Poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company !
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude ;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth

TO THE SKYLARK

ETHEREAL minstrel ! pilgrim of the sky !
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?
Or while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler !—that love-prompted strain
—'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond—
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain :
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege ! to sing
All independent of the leafy Spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood ;
A privacy of glorious light is thine ;
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine ;
Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam—
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home.

William Wordsworth

STRAY PLEASURES

“ —*Pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find.*”

By their floating Mill,
That lies dead and still,
Behold yon Prisoners three,
The Miller with two Dames, on the breast of the
Thames !
The Platform is small, but gives room for them all ;
And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes
To their Mill where it floats,
To their House and their Mill tethered fast ;
To the small wooden Isle where, their work to
beguile,
They from morning to even take whatever is given ;—
And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the Spires,
All alive with the fires
Of the Sun going down to his rest,
In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,
They dance,—there are three, as jocund as free,
While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,
They themselves make the Reel,
And their Music's a prey which they seize ;
It plays not for them,—what matter ? 'tis theirs ;
And if they had care, it has scattered their cares,
While they dance, crying, " Long as ye please ! "

They dance not for me,
Yet mine is their glee !
Thus pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find ;
Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,
Moves all nature to gladness and mirth.

The Showers of the Spring
Rouse the Birds, and they sing ;
If the Wind do but stir for his proper delight,
Each Leaf, that and this, his neighbour will kiss ;
Each Wave, one and t'other, speeds after his brother ;
They are happy, for that is their right !

William Wordsworth,

THE SMALL CELANDINE

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks like many more from cold and rain,
And the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distrest,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm
In close self-shelter, like a thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I past,
And recognised it, though an alter'd form,
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopp'd and said, with inly-mutter'd voice,
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold;
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;
It cannot help itself in its decay;
Stiff in its members, wither'd, changed of hue,"—
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey.

To be a prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth,
A miser's pensioner—behold our lot!
O Man! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not!

William Wordsworth

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

SHE was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight ;
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament ;
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair,
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn ;
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too !
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty ;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food ;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eyes serene
The very pulse of the machine ;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death ;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command ;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

William Wordsworth

A FAREWELL

(COMPOSED IN THE YEAR 1802)

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-ground,
Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
Of that magnificent temple which doth bound
One side of our whole vale with grandeur rare ;
Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,
The loveliest spot that man hath ever found,
Farewell !—we leave thee to Heaven's peaceful care,
Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,
And there will safely ride when we are gone :
The flowering shrubs that deck our humble door
Will prosper, though untended and alone :
Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none :
These narrow bounds contain our private store
Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine upon ;
Here are they in our sight—we have no more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell !
For two months now in vain we shall be sought ;
We leave you here in solitude to dwell
With these our latest gifts of tender thought ;
Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat,
Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, farewell !
Whom from the borders of the Lake we brought,
And placed together, near our rocky Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear ;
And she will prize this Bower, this Indian shed,
Our own contrivance, building without peer !
—A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,

Whose pleasures are in wild fields gathered,
With joyousness, and with a thoughtful cheer,
Will come to you,—to you herself will wed,—
And love the blessed life that we lead here.

Dear Spot! which we have watched with tender
 heed,
Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms blown
Among the distant mountains, flower and weed,
Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,
Making all kindness registered and known;
Thou for our sakes, thou Nature's Child indeed,
Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,
Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,
That hast thy wayward moods, as thou dost show
To them who look not daily on thy face;
Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
And sayest, when we forsake thee, "Let them go!"
Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race
Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,
And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell her tales of years gone by,
And this sweet spring, the best beloved and best;
Joy will be flown in its mortality;
Something must stay to tell us of the rest.
Here, thronged with primroses, the steep rock's
 breast
Glittered at evening like a starry sky;
And in this bush our Sparrow built her nest,
Of which I sang one song that will not die..

O happy Garden ! whose seclusion deep
Hath been so friendly to industrious hours ;
And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep
Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of flowers,
And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers ;
Two burning months let summer overleap,
And, coming back with Her who will be ours,
Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

William Wordsworth

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,
At thought of what I now behold :
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold
Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mould
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
And thou forbidden to appear ?
As if it were thyself that's here
I shrink with pain ;
And both my wishes and my fear
Alike are vain.

Off weight—nor press on weight !—away
Dark thoughts !—they came, but not to stay ;
With chastened feelings would I pay
The tribute due
To him, and aught that hides his clay
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius "glinted" forth,
Rose like a star that touching earth,
 For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth
 With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
The struggling heart, where be they now?—
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
 The prompt, the brave,
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
 And silent grave.

Well might I mourn that He was gone,
Whose light I hail'd when first it shone
When, breaking forth as nature's own,
 It showed my youth
How Verse may build a princely throne
 On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends,—
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
 By Skiddaw seen,—
Neighbours we were, and loving friends
 We might have been:

True friends though diversely inclined;
But heart with heart and mind with mind
Where the main fibres are entwined,
 Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;
Thou " poor Inhabitant below,"
At this dread moment—even so—
 Might we together
Have sate and talked where gowans blow,
 Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
Within my reach ; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast !
 But why go on ?—
Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
 His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
(Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)
Lies gathered to his Father's side,
 Soul-moving sight !
Yet one to which is not denied
 Some sad delight.

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
Hath early found among the dead,
Harboured where none can be misled,
 Wronged, or distrest ;
And surely here it may be said
 That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
Checked off-times in a devious race,
May He, who halloweth the place
 Where Man is laid,
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
 For which it prayed !

Sighing I turned away ; but ere
Night fell, I heard, or seemed to hear,
Music that sorrow comes not near,
 A ritual hymn,
Chaunted in love that casts out fear
 By Seraphim.

William Wordsworth

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL AT INVERSNEYDE
UPON LOCH LOMOND

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head :
And these gray rocks, that household lawn,
Those trees—a veil just half withdrawn,
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake,
This little bay, a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy abode ;
In truth together do ye seem
Like something fashion'd in a dream ;
Such forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep !
But O fair Creature ! in the light
Of common day, so heavenly bright,
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart :
God shield thee to thy latest years !
Thee neither know I nor thy peers :
And yet my eyes are fill'd with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away ;
For never saw I mien or face
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scatter'd, like a random seed,
Remote from men, Thou dost not need
The embarrassed look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacedness :
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a Mountaineer :
A face with gladness overspread ;
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred ;
And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech :
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life !
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful ?
O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell ;
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
A shepherd, thou a shepherdess !
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality :

Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea : and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see !
Thy elder brother I would be,
Thy father—anything to thee.

Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place :
Joy have I had ; and going hence
I bear away my recompence.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :
Then why should I be loth to stir ?
I feel this place was made for her ;
To give new pleasure like the past,
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part ;
For I, methinks, till I grow old
As fair before me shall behold
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
And Thee, the Spirit of them all !

William Wordsworth

THE REAPER

BENOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass !
Reaping and singing by herself ;
Stop here, or gently pass !

Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain ;
O listen ! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands :
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings ?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago :
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day ?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending ;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending ;
I listen'd, motionless and still ;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

William Wordsworth

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON
REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR

FIVE years have passed ; five summers, with the
length

Of five long winters ! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a sweet inland murmur.—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion ; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
Among the woods and copses, nor disturb
The wild green landscape. Once again I see
These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild : these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door ; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees !
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous Forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,

Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration :—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened :—That serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul :
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft,
In darkness, and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye ! Thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee !
And now, with gleams of half-extinguished
thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,

And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again :
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when
first

I came among these hills ; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led : more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite ; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur ; other gifts
Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompence. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts : a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains ; and of all that we behold
From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half create,
And what perceive ; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay :
For thou art with me, here, upon the banks
Of this fair river ; thou, my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend, and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister ! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy : for she can so inform

The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;
And let the misty mountain winds be free
To blow against thee : and in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations ! Nor perchance
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence, wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together ; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service ; rather say
With warmer love, oh ! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake !

William Wordsworth

ELEGIAC STANZAS

(Suggested by a picture of Peele Castle in a storm, painted
by Sir George Beaumont)

I WAS thy neighbour once, thou rugged pile !
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee ;
I saw thee every day ; and all the while
Thy form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet, was the air !
So like, so very like, was day to day !
Whene'er I looked, thy image still was there ;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm ! It seemed no sleep,
No mood, which season takes away, or brings ;
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah ! *then* if mine had been the painter's hand
To express what then I saw ; and add the gleam,
The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream ;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary pile,
Amid a world how different from this !
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile :
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years ; a chronicle of heaven ;—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife ;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such picture would I at that time have made ;
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more ;
I have submitted to a new control :
A power is gone, which nothing can restore ;
A deep distress hath humanised my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been :
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend ! who would have been the
Friend,

If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend ;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work !—yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here ;
That Hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed, in a dream, at distance from the Kind !
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied ; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne !
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

William Wordsworth

THE LEECH-GATHERER, OR RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night ;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods ;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright ;
The birds are singing in the distant woods ;
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods ;
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chatters ;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors ;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth ;
The grass is bright with rain-drops ;—on the moors
The Hare is running races in her mirth ;
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist ; that, glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

I was a traveller then upon the moor ;
I saw the Hare that raced about with joy ;
I heard the woods and distant waters roar ;
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy :
The pleasant season did my heart employ :
My old remembrances went from me wholly ;
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy !

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no further go,
As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low,
To me that morning did it happen so ;
And fears and fancies thick upon me came ;
Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I knew not, nor
could name.

I heard the Sky-lark warbling in the sky ;
And I bethought me of the playful Hare :
Even such a happy child of earth am I ;
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;
Far from the world I walk, and from all care ;
But there may come another day to me—
Solitude, pain of heart, distress and poverty.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood :
As if all needful things would come unsought
To genial faith, still rich in genial good :
But how can He expect that others should
Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all ?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
The sleepless Soul that perished in his pride ;
Of Him who walked in glory and in joy
Following his plough, along the mountain-side :
By our own spirits are we deified ;
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness ;
But thereof comes in the end despondency and
madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
A leading from above, a something given,
Yet it befel, that, in this lonely place,
When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
I saw a Man before me unawares :
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs.

As a huge Stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;
Wonder to all who do the same espy,
By what means it could thither come, and whence
So that it seems a thing endued with sense :
Like a Sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun itself ;

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead,
Nor all asleep—in his extreme old age :
His body was bent double, feet and head
Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

Himself he propped, his body, limbs, and face,
Upon a long grey Staff of shaven wood :
And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
Upon the margin of that moorish flood
Motionless as a Cloud the Old-man stood ;
That heareth not the loud winds when they call
And moveth all together, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the Pond
Stirred with his Staff, and fixedly did look
Upon the muddy water, which he coned,

As if he had been reading in a book :
And now a stranger's privilege I took ;
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
" This morning gives us promise of a glorious day."

A gentle answer did the Old-man make,
In courteous speech which forth he slowly drew :
And him with further words I thus bespake,
" What occupation do you there pursue ?
This is a lonesome place for one like you."
He answered, while a flash of mild surprise
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet vivid eyes.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
But each in solemn order followed each,
With something of a lofty utterance drest—
Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach
Of ordinary men ; a stately speech ;
Such as grave livers do in Scotland use,
Religious men, who give to God and Man their dues.

He told, that to these waters he had come
To gather Leeches, being old and poor :
Employment hazardous and wearisome !
And he had many hardships to endure ;
From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor ;
Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance ;
And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

The Old-man still stood talking by my side ;
But now his voice to me was like a stream
Scarce heard ; nor word from word could I divide ;
And the whole Body of the Man did seem
Like one whom I had met with in a dream ;
Or like a man from some far region sent,
To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

My former thoughts returned : the fear that kills ;
And hope that is unwilling to be fed ;
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills ;
And mighty Poets in their misery dead.
—Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
My question eagerly did I renew,
“ How is it that you live, and what is it you do ? ”

He with a smile did then his words repeat ;
And said, that, gathering Leeches, far and wide
He travelled ; stirring thus about his feet
The waters of the Pools where they abide.
“ Once I could meet with them on every side ;
But they have dwindled long by slow decay ;
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.”

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The Old-man's shape, and speech, all troubled me :
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently.
While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
He, having made a pause, the same discourse
renewed.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,
But stately in the main ; and when he ended,
I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.
“ God,” said I, “ be my help and stay secure ;
I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely
moor ! ”

William Wordsworth

ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY
FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY
CHILDHOOD

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight
 To me did seem
 Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—
 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
 By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no
more.

 The rainbow comes and goes,
 And lovely is the rose ;
 The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare ;
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair ;
 The sunshine is a glorious birth ;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief :
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong.

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ;—
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong :
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,

And all the earth is gay ;

Land and sea

Give themselves up to jollity,

And with the heart of May

Doth every beast keep holiday ;—

Thou child of joy

Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou
happy Shepherd-boy !

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call

Ye to each other make ; I see

The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;

My heart is at your festival,

My head hath its coronal,

The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.

Oh evil day ! if I were sullen

While Earth herself is adorning

This sweet May morning ;

And the children are culling

On every side

In a thousand valleys far and wide,

Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm

And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm :—

I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !

—But there's a tree, of many, one,

A single field which I have looked upon,

Both of them speak of something that is gone :

The pansy at my feet

Doth the same tale repeat :

Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?

Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

•

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting
 And cometh from afar ;
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home :
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy ;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended ;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size !
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes !

See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment of his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art ;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral ;
 And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song :
 Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part ;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That life brings with her in her equipage ;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy soul's immensity ;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal Mind,—
 Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !
 On whom those truths do rest
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by ;
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,

•

Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

O joy ! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction : not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest,
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—

Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise ;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings ;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised :

But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing ;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,
To perish never ;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor man nor boy

Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy !

Hence, in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither ;

Can in a moment travel thither—
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty rolling waters evermore.

Then sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound !

We in thought will join your throng
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May !

What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,

Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower ;

We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind ;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be ;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering ;

In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves
Forbode not any severing of our loves !

Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;
I only have relinquish'd one delight

To live beneath your more habitual sway :
I love the brooks which down their channels fret
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
 Is lovely yet ;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

William Wordsworth

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free ;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea :
Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child ! dear girl ! that walkest with me
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought
Thy nature is not therefore less divine :
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

William Wordsworth

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

(SEPT. 3, 1802)

EARTH has not anything to show more fair :
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty :
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning : silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill ;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will :
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

*William Wordsworth*INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,
CAMBRIDGE

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,
With ill-matched aims the Architect who planned
(Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed Scholars only) this immense
And glorious work of fine intelligence !
—Give all thou canst ; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more :
So deemed the man who fashion'd for the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof

Self-posed, and scooped into ten thousand cells
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to die ;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

William Wordsworth

WE MUST BE FREE OR DIE

It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, " with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"
Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
Should perish ; and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
Armoury of the invincible knights of old :
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spoke ; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held.—In everything we are sprung
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

William Wordsworth

WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed,
I had, my Country !—am I to be blamed ?

Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
For dearly must we prize thee ; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men ;
And I by my affection was beguiled :
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child !

William Wordsworth

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGA- TION OF SWITZERLAND

Two Voices are there ; one is of the Sea,
One of the Mountains ; each a mighty Voice :
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him,—but hast vainly striven :
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft ;
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left—
For, high-soul'd Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by Thee !

William Wordsworth

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN
REPUBLIC

ONCE did she hold the gorgeous east in fee
And was the safeguard of the west : the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
She was a maiden City, bright and free ;
No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay ;
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reach'd its final day :
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great is pass'd away.

William Wordsworth

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men !
Whether the whistling rustic tend his plough
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den ;—
O miserable Chieftain ! where and when
Wilt thou find patience ? Yet die not ; do thou
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow :
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind
Powers that will work for thee ; air, earth, and skies ;
There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee ; thou hast great allies ;
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

William Wordsworth

THE BREAD OF LIFE

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest
To think that now our life is only drest
For show ; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
Or groom !—We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest ;
The wealthiest man among us is the best :
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
Plain living and high thinking are no more :
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

William Wordsworth

MILTON

MILTON ! thou shouldst be living at this hour :
England hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men :
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart :
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free ;
So didst thou travel on life's common way
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

William Wordsworth

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

THE World is too much with us ; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers ;
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers,
For this, for every thing, we are out of tune ;
It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,—
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

William Wordsworth

THE INNER VISION

MOST sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
While a fair region round the traveller lies
Which he forbears again to look upon ;
Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,
The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
Of meditation, slipping in between
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
—If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
Let us break off all commerce with the Muse :
With Thought and Love companions of our way—
Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,—
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews
Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

William Wordsworth

BLESSINGS BE WITH THEM

NOR can I not believe but that hereby
Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote
From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,
Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous
thought :

And thus from day to day my little boat
Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.
Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !
Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

William Wordsworth

AFTER-THOUGHT

I THOUGHT of thee, my partner and my guide,
As being past away,—Vain sympathies !
For, backward, Duddon ! as I cast my eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide ;
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide ;
The Form remains, the Function never dies ;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish ;—be it so !
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour ;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcend-
ent dower,

We feel that we are greater than we know.

William Wordsworth

ON HIS MISTRESS, THE QUEEN OF
BOHEMIA

You meaner beauties of the night,
That poorly satisfy our eyes
More by your number than your light ;
You common people of the skies ;
What are you when the moon shall rise .

You curious chanters of the wood,
That warble forth Dame Nature's lays,
Thinking your passions understood
By your weak accents, what's your praise
When Philomel her voice shall raise ?

You violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known,
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own ;
What are you when the rose is blown ?

So when my mistress shall be seen
In form and beauty of her mind,
By virtue first, then choice, a Queen,
Tell me if she were not designed
The eclipse and glory of her kind ?

Sir Henry Wotton

THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will ;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill !

Whose passions not his masters are ;
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath ;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Nor vice ; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise ;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good ;

Who hath his life from rumours freed ;
Whose conscience is his strong retreat ;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppressors great ;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend ;
And entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend ;

—This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall :
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Sir Henry Wotton

THE SONG OF WANDERING AENGUS

I WENT out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread ;
And when white moths were on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor,
I went to blow the fire a-flame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And someone called me by my name :
It had become a glimmering girl
With apple blossom in her hair,
Who called me by my name and ran
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,
And kiss her lips and take her hands ;
And walk among long dappled grass,
And pluck till time and times are done
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.

W. B. Yeats

THE SECRET ROSE

FAR off, most secret, and inviolate Rose,
Enfold me in my hour of hours ; where those
Who sought thee in the Holy Sepulchre,
Or in the wine vat, dwell beyond the stir
And tumult of defeated dreams ; and deep
Among pale eyelids, heavy with the sleep
Men have named beauty. Thy great leaves enfold
The ancient beards, the helms of ruby and gold
Of the crowned Magi ; and the king whose eyes
Saw the Pierced Hands and Rood of elder rise
In Druid vapour and make the torches dim,
Till vain frenzy awoke and he died ; and him
Who met Fand walking among flaming dew
By a gray shore where the wind never blew,

And lost the world and Emer for a kiss ;
And him who drove the gods out of their liss,
And till a hundred morns had flowered red,
Feasted and wept the barrows of his dead ;
And the proud dreaming king who flung the crown
And sorrow away, and calling bard and clown
Dwelt among wine-stained wanderers in deep woods ;
And him who sold tillage, and house, and goods,
And sought through lands and islands numberless
 years,
Until he found, with laughter and with tears,
A woman of so shining loveliness,
That men threshed corn at midnight by a tress,
A little stolen tress. I, too, await
The hour of thy great wind of love and hate.
When shall the stars be blown about the sky,
Like the sparks blown out of a smithy, and die ?
Surely thine hour has come, thy great wind blows,
Far off, most secret, and inviolate Rose ?

W. B. Yeats

THE WILD SWANS AT COOLE

THE trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky ;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine and fifty swans.

The nineteenth Autumn has come upon me
Since I first made my count ;
I saw, before I had well finished,
All suddenly mount
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings
Upon their clamorous wings.

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,
And now my heart is sore.
All's changed since I, hearing at twilight,
The first time on this shore,
The bell-beat of their wings above my head,
Trod with a lighter tread.

Unwearied still, lover by lover,
They paddle in the cold,
Companionable streams or climb the air ;
Their hearts have not grown old ;
Passion or conquest, wander where they will,
Attend upon them still.

But now they drift on the still water
Mysterious, beautiful ;
Among what rushes will they build,
By what lake's edge or pool
Delight men's eyes, when I awake some day
To find they have flown away ?

W. B. Yeats

THE SORROW OF LOVE

THE quarrel of the sparrows in the caves,
The full round moon and the star-laden sky,
And the loud song of the ever-singing leaves,
Had hid away earth's old and weary cry.
And then you came with those red mournful lips,
And with you came the whole of the world's tears,
And all the sorrows of her labouring ships,
And all the burden of her myriad years.
And now the sparrows warring in the eaves,
The curd-pale moon, the white stars in the sky,
And the loud chaunting of the unquiet leaves
Are shaken with earth's old and weary cry.

W. B. Yeats

AEDH WISHES FOR THE CLOTHS OF
HEAVEN

HAD I the heaven's embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet :
But I, being poor, have only my dreams ;
I have spread my dreams under your feet :
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

W. B. Yeats

THE CHILD'S DEATH

He did but float a little way
Adown the stream of time ;
With dreamy eyes watching the ripples play,
Or listening to their chime.
His slender sail
Scarce felt the gale ;
He did but float a little way,
And, putting to the shore,
While yet 'twas early day,
Went calmly on his way,
To dwell with us no more.
No jarring did he feel,
No grating on his vessel's keel ;
A strip of yellow sand
Mingled the waters with the land,
Where he was seen no more !
O stern word, Never more !
Full short his journey was ; no dust
Of earth unto his sandals clave ;
The weary weight that old men must,
He bore not to the grave.

He seemed a cherub who had lost his way
And wandered hither ; so his stay
With us was short ; and 'twas most meet
That he should be no delver in earth's clod.
Nor need to pause and cleanse his feet
To stand before his God.

Anonymous

FEASTING THE KING

YET if His Majesty, our sovereign lord,
Should of his own accord
Friendly himself invite,
And say, " I'll be your guest to-morrow night,"
How should we stir ourselves, call and command
All hands to work ! " Let no man idle stand !
" Set me fine Spanish tables in the hall ;
See they be fitted all ;
Let there be room to eat
And order taken that there want no meat.
See ev'ry scone and candlestick made bright,
That without tapers they may give a light.
" Look to the presence : are the carpets spread,
The dazie o'er the head,
The cushions in the chairs,
And all the candles lighted on the stairs ?
Perfume the chambers, and in any case
Let each man give attendance in his place ! "
Thus, if a king were coming, would we do ;
And 'twere good reason too ;
For 'tis a duteous thing
To show all honour to an earthly king,
And after all our travail and our cost,
So he be pleased, to think no labour lost.

But at the coming of the King of Heaven
All's set at six and seven ;
We wallow in our sin,
Christ cannot find a chamber in the inn.
We entertain Him always like a stranger,
And, as at first, still lodge Him in the manger.

Anonymous

LOVE NOT ME FOR COMELY GRACE

Love not me for comely grace,
For my pleasing eye or face,
Nor for any outward part,
No, nor for a constant heart :
 For these may fail or turn to ill,
 So thou and I shall sever :
Keep, therefore, a true woman's eye,
And love me still but know not why—
 So hast thou the same reason still
 To doat upon me ever !

Anonymous

SINCE FIRST I SAW YOUR FACE

SINCE first I saw your face I resolved to honour
 and renown ye ;
If now I be disdainèd, I wish my heart had never
 known ye.
What ? I that loved and you that liked, shall we
 begin to wrangle ?
No, no, no, my heart is fast and cannot disentangle.

If I admire or praise you too much, that fault you
may forgive me ;
Or if my hands had stray'd but a touch, then justly
might you leave me.
I asked you leave, you bade me love ; is 't now a
time to chide me ?
No, no, no, I'll love you still what fortune e'er
betide me.
The sun, whose beams most glorious are, rejecteth
no beholder,
And your sweet beauty past compare made my poor
eyes the bolder :
Where beauty moves and wit delights and signs of
kindness bind me,
There, O there ! where'er I go I'll leave my heart
behind me !

Anonymous

THERE IS A LADY SWEET AND KIND

THERE is a Lady sweet and kind,
Was never face so pleased my mind ;
I did but see her passing by,
And yet I love her till I die.

Her gesture, motion, and her smiles,
Her wit, her voice my heart beguiles,
Beguiles my heart, I know not why,
And yet I love her till I die.

Cupid is wingèd and doth range,
Her country so my love doth change :
But change she earth, or change she sky,
Yet will I love her till I die.

Anonymous

FAIN WOULD I CHANGE THAT NOTE

FAIN would I change that note
To which fond Love hath charm'd me
Long, long to sing by rote,
Fancying that that harm'd me :
Yet when this thought doth come,
" Love is the perfect sum
Of all delight,"
I have no other choice
Either for pen or voice
To sing or write.

O Love ! they wrong thee much
That say thy sweet is bitter,
When thy rich fruit is such
As nothing can be sweeter.
Fair house of joy and bliss,
Where truest pleasure is,
I do adore thee :
I know thee what thou art,
I serve thee with my heart,
And fall before thee.

Anonymous

O, WALY WALY UP THE BANK

O, WALY waly up the bank,
And waly waly down the brae,
And waly waly yon burn-side
Where I and my Love were wont to gae !
I leant my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trusty tree ;
But first it bow'd and syne it brak—
Sae my true Love did lightly me,

O, waly waly, but love is bonny
A little time while it is new ;
But when 'tis auld, it waxeth cauld
And fades awa' like morning dew.
O, wherefore should I busk my head ?
Or wherefore should I kame my hair ?
For my true Love has me forsook,
And says he'll never loe me mair.

Now Arthur's Seat sall be my bed :
The sheets sall ne'er be pressed by me.
Saint Anton's Well sall be my drink,
Since my true Love has forsaken me.
Marti'mas wind, when wilt thou blaw
And shake the green leaves aff the tree ?
O gentle Death, when wilt thou come ?
For of my life I am wearie.

'Tis not the frost, that freezes fell,
Nor blawing snaw's inclemencie,
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry ;
But my Love's heart grown cauld to me.
When we came in by Glasgow town,
We were a comely sight to see :
My Love was clad in the black velvet,
And I mysell in cramasie.

But had I wist, before I kist,
That love had been sae ill to win,
I had lockt my heart in a case of gowd
And pinn'd it with a siller pin.
And, O ! if my young babe were born,
And set upon the nurse's knee,
And I mysell were dead and gane,
And the green grass growing over me !
Anonymous

LOVE WILL FIND OUT THE WAY

Over the mountains
And over the waves,
Under the fountains
And under the graves ;
Under floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey ;
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way.

Where there is no place
For the glow-worm to lie ;
Where there is no space
For receipt of a fly ;
Where the midge dares not venture
Lest herself fast she lay ;
If love come, he will enter
And soon find out his way.

You may esteem him
A child for his might ;
Or you may deem him
A coward from his flight ;
But if she whom love doth honour
Be concealed from the day,
Set a thousand guards upon her,
Love will find out the way.

Some think to lose him
By having him confined ;
And some do suppose him,
Poor thing, to be blind ;
But if ne'er so close ye wall him,
Do the best that you may,
Blind love, if so ye call him,
Will find out his way.

You may train the eagle
To stoop to your fist ;
Or you may inveigle
The phoenix of the east ;
The lioness, ye may move her
To give o'er her prey ;
But you'll ne'er stop a lover :
He will find out his way.

Anonymous

HELEN OF KIRCONNELL

I wish I were where Helen lies ;
Night and day on me she cries :
O, that I were where Helen lies
On fair Kirconnell Lee.

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
And died to succour me !

O, think na ye my heart was sair
When my Love dropt down and spak nac mair !
I laid her down wi' meikle care
On fair Kirconnell Lee.

As I went down the water-side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell Lee.

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hacked him in pieces sma',
I hacked him in pieces sma'
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare !
I'll make a garland of thy hair
Shall bind my heart for evermair
Until the day I die.

O, that I were where Helen lies !
Night and day on me she cries :
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says :—"Haste and come to me !"

O Helen fair ! O Helen chaste !
If I were with thee, I were blest,
Where thou lies low and takes thy rest
On fair Kirconnell Lee.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn ower my een,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell Lee.

I wish I were where Helen lies ;
Night and day on me she cries ;
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

Anonymous

MADRIGAL

Love in thy youth, fair maid ; be wise,
Old Time will make thee colder,
And though each morning new arise,
Yet we each day grow older.
Thou as heaven art fair and young,
Thine eyes like twin stars shining ;
But, ere another day be sprung,
All these will be declining.

Then winter comes with all his fears,
And all thy sweets shall borrow ;
Too late then wilt thou shower thy tears,
And I too late shall sorrow.

Anonymous

AS YE CAME FROM THE HOLY LAND

As ye came from the holy land
Of Walsinghame,
Met you not with my true love
By the way as you came ?

How should I know your true love,
That have met many a one
As I came from the holy land,
That have come, that have gone ?

She is neither white nor brown,
But as the heavens fair ;
There is none hath her form divine
In the earth or the air.

Such a one did I meet, good sir,
Such an angelic face,
Who like a nymph, like a queen, did appear
In her gait, in her grace.

She hath left me here alone
All alone, as unknown,
Who sometime did me lead with herself,
And me loved as her own.

What's the cause that she leaves you alone
And a new way doth take,
That sometime did love you as her own,
And her joy did you make ?

I have loved her all my youth,
But now am old, as you see :
Love likes not the falling fruit,
Nor the withered tree.

Know that Love is a careless child,
And forgets promise past :
He is blind, he is deaf when he list,
And in faith never fast

His desire is a dureless content,
And a trustless joy ;
He is won with a world of despair,
And is lost with a toy.

Of womenkind such indeed is the love,
Or the word love abusèd,
Under which many childish desires
And conceits are excusèd.

But true love is a durable fire,
In the mind ever burning,
Never sick, never dead, never cold,
From itself never turning.

Anonymous

IF ALL THE WORLD WERE PAPER

If all the world were paper,
And all the sea were ink,
And all the trees were bread and cheese,
What should we do for drink ?

If all the world were sand-o
Oh, then what should we lack-o
If, as they say, there were no clay,
How should we take tobacco ?

If all our vessels ran-a
If none but had a crack ;
If Spanish apes ate all the grapes,
How should we do for sack ?

If friars had no bald pates,
Nor nuns had no dark cloisters ;
If all the seas were beans and peas,
How should we do for oysters ?

If there had been no projects,
Nor none that did great wrongs ;
If fiddlers should turn players all,
How should we do for songs ?

If all things were eternal,
And nothing their end bringing ;
If this should be, then how should we
Here make an end of singing ?

Anonymous

PEACE

I sought for Peace, but could not find,
I sought it in the city,
But they were of another mind,
The more's the pity !
I sought for Peace of country swain,
But yet I could not find ;
So I, returning home again,
Left Peace behind.

Sweet Peace, where dost thou dwell ? said I.

Methought a voice was given ;
Peace dwelt not here, long since did fly
• To God in heaven.

Thought I, this echo is but vain,

To folly 'tis of kin,
Anon I heard it tell me plain,
'Twas killed by sin.

Then I believed the former voice,

And rested well content,
Laid down and slept, rose, did rejoice,
And then to heaven went.

There I enquired for Peace, and found it true
An heavenly plant it was, and sweetly grew.

Anonymous

CHLORIS IN THE SNOW

I SAW fair Chloris walk alone,
When feathered rain came softly down,
As Jove descending from his tower
To court her in a silvery shower :
The wanton snow flew to her breast,
Like pretty birds into their nest,
But overcome with whiteness there,
For grief it thawed into a tear :

Thence, falling on her garment's hem,
To deck her, froze into a gem.

Anonymous

THE LOVE-CALL

PHYLLIDA. Corydon, arise, my Corydon!

Titan shineth clear.

CORYDON. Who is it that calleth Corydon?

Who is it that I hear?

PHYL. Phyllida, thy true love, calleth thee,

Arise then, arise then,

Arise and keep thy flock with me!

COR. Phyllida, my true love, is it she?

I come then, I come then,

I come and keep my flock with thee.

PHYL. Here are cherries ripe for my Corydon;

Eat them for my sake.

COR. Here's my oaten pipe, my lovely one,

Sport for thee to make.

PHYL. Here are threads, my true love, fine as silk,

To knit thee, to knit thee,

A pair of stockings white as milk.

COR. Here are reeds, my true love, fine and neat,

To make thee, to make thee,

A bonnet to withstand the heat.

PHYL. I will gather flowers, my Corydon,

To set in thy cap.

COR. I will gather pears, my lovely one,

To put in thy lap.

PHYL. I will buy my true love garters gay

For Sundays, for Sundays,

To wear about his legs so tall.

COR. I will buy my true love yellow say,¹

For Sundays, for Sundays,

To wear about her middle small.

¹ *Soie*, silk.

PHYL. When my Corydon sits on a hill
Making melody—

COR. When my lovely one goes to her wheel,
Singing cheerily—

PHYL. Sure methinks my true love doth excel
For sweetness, for sweetness,
Our Pan, that old Arcadian knight.

COR. And methinks my true love bears the bell
For clearness, for clearness,
Beyond the nymphs that be so
bright.

PHYL. Had my Corydon, my Corydon,
Been, alack ! her swain—

COR. Had my lovely one, my lovely one,
Been in Ida plain—

PHYL. Cynthia Endymion had refused,
Preferring, preferring
My Corydon to play withal.

COR. The Queen of Love had been excused
Bequeathing, bequeathing
My Phyllida the golden ball.

PHYL. Yonder comes my mother, Corydon,
Whither shall I fly ?

COR. Under yonder beech, my lovely one,
While she passeth by.

PHYL. Say to her thy true love was not here :
Remember, remember,
To-morrow is another day.

COR. Doubt me not, my true love, do not fear ;
Farewell then, farewell then !
Heaven keep our loves away !

Anonymous

A LYKE-WAKE DIRGE

THIS ae nighte, this ae nighte,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
Fire and fleet and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.

When thou from hence away art past
—*Every nighte and alle,*
To Whinny-muir thou com'st at last ;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon
—*Every nighte and alle,*
Sit thee down and put them on ;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If hosen and shoon thou ne'er gav'st nane,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
The whinnes sall pick thee to the bare bane ;
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Whinny-muir when thou may'st pass,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
To Brig o' Dread thou com'st at last ;
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Brig o' Dread when thou may'st pass,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last ;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest meat or drink,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
The fire sall never make thee shrink ;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If meat or drink thou ne'er gav'st nane,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane ;
And Christe receive thy saule.

This æ nighte, this æ nighte,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
Fire and fleet and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.

Anonymous

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

	PAGE
A child's a plaything for an hour	269
A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot !	80
A naked house, a naked moor	408
A slumber did my spirit seal	469
A sweet disorder in the dress	233
A wanderer is man from his birth	37
A weary lot is thine, fair maid	346
A Widow bird sate mourning for her love . . .	390
Accept, thou shrine of my dead saint	257
Ao fond kiss, and then we sever	100
Ah ! sunflower, weary of time	60
Ah, did you once see Shelby plain	86
Ah, what avails the sceptred race	269
All kings and all their favourites	186
All the hills and vales along	395
All thoughts, all passions, all delights	135
Along the avenue of cypresses	270
Among all lovely things my love had been . . .	469
And are ye sure the news is true	293
And did those feet in ancient time	66
And has the Spring's all glorious eye	129
Art thou pale for weariness	291
Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers .	171
As I in hoary winter's night	396
As it fell upon a day	41
As ye came from the holy land	526
At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time	94
Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones	299
Awake, awake, my little boy !	64

	PAGE
Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead	87
Beautiful must be the mountains whence ye come	73
Before the beginning of years	413
Before the Roman came to Rye or out of Severn strode	126
Behold her, single in the field	484
Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy	312
Blow, blow, thou winter wind	362
Blow out, you bugles, over the rich dead	77
Blows the wind to-day, and the sun and the rain are flying	412
Break, break, break	422
Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art—	257
Busy old fool, unruly Sun	178
By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept	49
By their floating mill	473
Call for the robin-redbreast and the wren	458
Calm was the day, and through the trembling air	398
Can I see another's woe	59
Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in Arms	300
Christ of His gentleness	204
Clear had the day been from the dawn	192
Coldly, sadly descends	30
Come away, come away, Death	364
Come, dear children, let us away	5
Come, little babe, come, silly soul	68
Come live with me and be my love	278
Come, Sleep; O Sleep! the certain knot of peace	393
Corydon, arise, my Corydon!	530
Crabbed age and youth	363
Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud	299
Crosses and troubles a-many have proved me	225
Cupid and my Campaspe played	275
Cyriack, this three years' day these eyes, though clear	296
Daughter to that good Earl, once President	298
Dear Child of Nature let them rail	470
Dear Lizbie Browne	216

	PAGE
Death, be not proud, though some have called thee	190
Dim-berried is the mistletoe	175
Does the road wind up-hill all the way ? . . .	331
Drink to me only with thine eyes	243
Down through the ancient Strand	221
Earth has not anything to show more fair . . .	505
E'en like two little bank-dividing brooks . . .	327
England, awake ! awake ! awake !	67
Ethereal minstrel ! pilgrim of the sky ! . . .	473
Even such is Time, that takes in trust	330
Ever let the Fancy roam	247
Everyone suddenly burst out singing	343
Fain would I change that note	521
Fair daffodils, we weep to see	231
Fair pledges of a fruitful tree	233
Far among the lonely hills	262
Far are the shades of Arabia	174
Far are those tranquil hills	173
Far off, most secret, and inviolate Rose	514
Far off the old snows evernew	315
Farewell, thou little Nook of mountain-ground .	477
Fear death ?—to feel the fog in my throat . .	93
Fear no more the heat o' the sun	364
Five years have passed ; five summers with the length	486
Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race .	313
Follow your saint, follow with accents sweet .	121
From harmony, from heavenly harmony	195
From the forests and highlands	380
From you, Ianthé, little troubles pass	269
Full fathom five thy father lies	363
Full many a glorious morning have I seen . . .	353
Give me more love, or more disdain	123
Give me my scallop-shell of quiet	330
Glories, pleasures, pomps, delights and ease .	201
Glory and loveliness have passed away	244
Go and catch a falling star	177

	PAGE
Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine	98
Go, for they call you, Shepherd, from the hill	15
Go, Lovely Rose—	452
God of our fathers, known of old	267
Goethe in Weimar sleeps, and Greece	27
Had I the heaven's embroidered cloths	517
Had we but World enough, and Time	288
Hail, beauteous stranger of the grove	272
Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!	365
Hame, hame, hame, hame fain wad I be	163
Happy is England! I could be content	245
Happy those early days when I	442
Hark! ah, the Nightingale!	13
Hark, all you ladies that do sleep!	119
Heaven overarches earth and sea	332
He could not die when trees were green	130
He did but float a little way	517
He is gone on the mountain	347
He that is down need fear no fall	95
He that is weary, let him sit	229
Hence, all you vain delights	200
Hence is't that I am carried towards the west	189
Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee	232
Here, a little child, I stand	234
Here lies, whom hound did ne'er pursue	154
Her supple breast thrills out	162
His golden locks Time hath to silver turned—	323
How happy is he born and taught	512
How like a winter hath my absence been	353
How many paltry, foolish, painted things	191
How sleep the brave, who sink to rest	148
How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth	295
How sweet I roamed from field to field	53
How vainly men themselves amaze	286
I am! yet what I am who cares, or knows?	131
I arise from dreams of thee	385
I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers	371
I cannot change as others do	331

	PAGE
I cannot reach it; and my striving eye . . .	443
I could not sleep for thinking of the sky . . .	290
I dreamed that as I wandered by the way . . .	387
I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden	384
I give you the end of a golden string	52
I got me flowers to straw Thy way	228
"I have no name	54
I hear a sudden cry of pain	406
I heard an Angel singing	64
I heard a thousand blended notes	464
I know my body's of so frail a kind	168
I leant upon a coppice gate	214
I love the fitful gust that shakes	132
I met a traveller from an antique land	389
I saw Eternity the other night	451
I saw fair Chloris walk alone	529
I saw the Virgin-Mother clad in green	70
I sought for Peace, but could not find	528
I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold	479
I strove with none; for none was worth my strife	270
I struck the board and cried, No more	227
I thought of thee, my partner and my guide . .	511
I travelled among unknown men	468
I wander through each charter'd street	65
I wandered lonely as a cloud	472
I was angry with my friend	66
I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged pile . .	491
I went out to the hazel wood	513
I wish I were where Helen lies	524
I wonder, by my troth, what thou and I	181
If all the world were paper	527
If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song	146
If I have faltered more or less	411
If I should die, think only this of me	78
If this world's friends might see but once	447
If thou survive my well-contented day	356
Image of her, whom I love more than she	185
In a coign of the cliff between lowland and high- land	415
In a drear-nighted December	250

	PAGE
In the deserted moon-blanch'd street . . .	34
In the highlands, in the country places . . .	409
In the hour of my distress . . .	234
In Xanadu did Kubla Khan . . .	139
Is there, for honest poverty . . .	104
It is a beauteous evening, calm and free . . .	504
It is not growing like a tree . . .	243
It is not to be thought of that the flood . . .	506
It lies before me there, and my own breath . . .	238
It little profits that an idle king . . .	430
It seemed that out of the battle I escaped . . .	319
It's wiser being good than bad . . .	91
It was a lover and his lass . . .	360
It was roses, roses, all the way . . .	89
It was the Rainbow gave thee birth . . .	170
I've heard them lilting at our ewe-milking . . .	197
 John Anderson my jo, John . . .	 103
Just for a handful of silver he left us . . .	90
 Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son . . .	 298
Let me not to the marriage of true minds . . .	355
Let others sing of Knights and Paladins . . .	164
Let us begin and carry up this corpse . . .	82
Light flows our war of mocking words, and yet . . .	25
Like as the damask rose you see . . .	454
Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore . . .	357
Like to the falling of a star . . .	260
Lord, what is man? why should he cost Thee . . .	158
Lord, when the wise men came from far . . .	201
Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back . . .	229
Love in thy youth, fair maid; be wise . . .	525
Love not me for comely grace . . .	519
 Mad Patsy said, he said to me . . .	 407
Man is his own star; and the soul that can . . .	200
Many a green isle needs must be . . .	374
Methought I saw my late espoused saint . . .	297
Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour . . .	509
Mortality, behold and fear . . .	43

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

541

	PAGE
Most sweet it is with uplifted eyes	510
Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold	246
Music, when soft voices die	383
Must I then see, alas, eternal night	231
My dear and only love, I pray	203
My heart aches, and a drowsy dumbness pains	254
My heart leaps up when I behold	463
My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes	320
My love is the maid of all maidens	41
My mother bore me in the southern wild	58
My mother groaned, my father wept	54
My pensive Sara! thy soft cheek reclined	140
My Son, these maxims make a rule	105
My Soul, there is a country	450
My true love hath my heart, and I have his	395
Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew	458
Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore	122
Nobly, nobly, Cape Saint Vincent to the North-West died away	92
No coward soul is mine	75
No longer mourn for me when I am dead	357
No spring, nor summer beauty hath such grace	184
Nor can I not believe but that hereby	511
Now God be thanked, Who has matched us with His hour	76
Now ragged clouds in the west are heaping	68
O blithe New-comer! I have heard	471
O, Brignal banks are wild and fair	348
O Friend! I know not which way I must look	503
O God of earth and altar	127
O! it is pleasant, with a heart at ease	145
O joys! infinite sweetness! with what flowers	446
O little self, within whose smallness lies	290
"O Mary, go and call the cattle home	261
O, men from the fields	148
O Mistress mine, where are you roaming	361
O my dark Rosaleen	275
O, my love's like a red, red rose	95

	PAGE
O saw ye bonnie Lesley	99
O sing unto my roundelay	124
O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying south	420
O, the sad day!	198
O thou undaunted daughter of desires	161
O, waly waly up the bank	521
"O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms.	251
"O where are you going with your love-locks flowing	332
O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being	369
O World invisible, we view thee	435
O world! O life! O time!	392
Obscurist night involved the sky	156
Of a' the airts the wind can blaw	96
Often at a wayside fountain	78
Oh, the little birds sing east and the little birds sing west	80
Oh, to be in England	91
Oh, fair sweet face! oh, eyes, celestial bright	199
On a poet's lips I slept	383
On Linden, when the sun was low	117
One lesson, Nature, let us learn of thee—	3
One word is too often profaned	389
Once did she hold the gorgeous east in fee	508
Once more the Heavenly Power	432
Others abide our question, thou art free	3
Over the mountains	523
Pack, clouds, away, and welcome, day!	236
Phoebus, arise	194
Phyllis is my only joy	350
Piping down the valleys wild	52
Proud Maisie is in the wood	344
Queen and huntress, chaste and fair	244
Rarely, rarely comest thou.	386
Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth	47
Rough wind, that moanest loud	390
Sabrina fair	301
Say not, the struggle naught availeth	133

	PAGE
Shall I compare thee to a summer's day ? . . .	352
Shall I, wasting in despair	459
She dwelt among the untrodden ways	465
She looked like a bird from a cloud	215
She sits upon a tombstone in the shade . . .	237
She walks in beauty, like the night	110
She was a Phantom of delight	476
Sheltered, when the rain blew over the hills it was	403
Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more	359
Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea	355
Since first I saw your face I resolved to honour and renown ye	519
Since I am coming to that Holy room	187
Since succour to the feeblest of the wise . . .	322
Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part	191
Sleep, baby, sleep ! What ails my dear . . .	460
Sombre and rich, the skies	239
Somehow this world is wonderful at times . . .	168
Somewhere afield here something lies	219
Sound, sound the clarion, fill the life ! . . .	350
Sound the flute	55
So we'll go no more a-roving	115
So zestfully canst thou sing	219
Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king	316
Standing aloof in giant ignorance	245
Still let my tyrants know, I am not doom'd to wear	74
Still to be neat, still to be drest	242
Strange fits of passion have I known	467
Strew on her roses, roses	12
Sunset and evening star	434
Sure thou didst flourish once ! and many springs	442
Sweet as Eden is the air	291
Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright	226
Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower	482
Sweet Stay-at-Home, sweet Well-content . . .	169
Swiftly walk over the western wave	391
 Tako, O, take those lips away	 361
Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense . .	505
Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean .	421

	PAGE
Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind	274
That time of year thou mayst in me behold	356
The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places	48
The blessèd Damsel leaned out	339
The Cock is crowing	463
The curfew tolls the knell of parting day	205
The flowers that in thy garden rise	317
The forward youth that would appear	282
The fountains mingle with the river	384
The Frost performs its secret ministry	143
The full sea rolls and thunders	223
The glories of our blood and state	393
The heavens declare the glory of God	46
The infinite shining heavens	411
The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!	112
The lark now leaves his wat'ry nest	164
The last and greatest Herald of Heaven's King	193
The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want	50
The man of life upright	120
The merchant, to secure his treasure	326
The naked earth is warm with Spring	213
The poplars are felled; farewell to the shade	153
The quarrel of the sparrows in the eaves	516
The sea hath many thousand sands	241
The sea is calm to-night	14
The seas are quiet when the winds give o'er	453
The splendour falls on castle walls	419
The star that bids the shepherd fold	302
The sun descending in the west	61
The trees are in their autumn beauty	515
The wonder of the world is o'er	1
The woods decay, the woods decay and fall	427
The World is too much with us; late and soon	510
The World's a bubble; and the life of man	39
The world's great age begins anew	381
The year's at the spring	93
There be none of Beauty's daughters	109
There is a flower, the lesser Celandine	475
There is a garden in her face	120
There is a lady sweet and kind	520

	PAGE
There is a pigeon in the apple tree	318
There is a sweet music here that softer falls.	423
There rolls the deep where grew the tree	421
'There's blood between us, love, my love	334
There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away	111
There was a bright and happy tree	202
There was a roaring in the wind all night	493
There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream	498
There were four of us about that bed	313
These little limbs	438
These sweeter far than lilies are	440
They are all gone into the world of light !	449
They that have power to hurt, and will do none	354
They told me, Heracitus, they told me you were dead	149
This ae nighte, this ae nighte	532
This life, which seems so fair	193
This Sycamore, oft musical with bees	144
Thou fair-hair'd angel of the Evening	54
Thou hearest the Nightingale begin the song of Spring	57
Thou inmost, ultimate	293
Thou perceivest the Flowers put forth their precious Odours	56
"Thou solitary !" the blackbird cried	176
Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness	252
Three years she grew in sun and shower	465
Through the black, rushing smoke-bursts	10
Thus said The Lord in the Vault above the Cherubim	263
Tiger, tiger, burning bright	60
Tired with all these, for restful death I cry	354
'Tis time this heart should be unmoved	116
To me, fair friend, you never can be old	351
To see a world in a grain of sand	63
To the ocean now I fly	304
Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men	508
'Twas at this season, year by year	456
'Twas on a lofty vase's side	210
Two Voices are there ; one is of the Sea	507

	PAGE
Underneath this sable hoarse	242
Under the greenwood tree	358
Under the wide and starry sky	412
Unfold ! unfold ! Take in His light	452
Upon this leafy bush	172
 Verse, a breeze mid blossom straying	 134
 We are not sure of sorrow	 418
We saw Thee in thy balmy nest	159
We watched her breathing thro' the night	237
Weary of myself and sick of asking	24
Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flower	107
Wee, sleekit, cowrin', tim'rous beastie	101
Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee	212
Weep you no more, sad fountains	190
Weighing the steadfastness and state	445
Well then ! I do plainly see	151
What beckoning ghost, along the moonlight shade	324
What happy, secret fountain	448
What is this life, if full of care	170
What is to come we know not. But we know	224
What needs my Shakespeare for his honour'd bones	301
What was he doing, the great god Pan	81
When all the world is young, lad	261
Whenas in silk my Julia goes	233
When earth's last picture is painted and the tubes are twisted and dried	 266
When fishes flew and forests walked	128
When friendly summer calls again	220
When God at first made man	226
When, goddess, thou lift'st up thy waken'd head	152
When I am dead, my dearest	334
When I am living in the Midlands	44
When I consider how my light is spent	296
When I have borne in memory what has tamed	506
When I was but thirteen or so	441
When icicles hang by the wall	361
When in the chronicle of wasted time	351
When Love with unconfined wings	273

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

547

	PAGE
When men were all asleep the snow came flying .	71
When my grave is broken up again	179
When sycamore leaves wer a-spreaden . . .	42
When the pods went pop on the broom, green broom	165
When thou must home to shades of underground	122
When the sheep are in the fauld and the kye at hame	271
When to the sessions of sweet silent thought .	352
When we have thrown off this old suit . . .	292
When with a serious musing I behold . . .	462
When you are old and I am passed away . .	224
Where are they gone, the old familiar faces ?	268
Where is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn ? .	146
Where, like a pillow on a bed	181
Where shall the lover rest	345
Where the bee sucks, there suck I	358
Where the remote Bermudas ride	280
Where the thistle lifts a purple crown . . .	436
Who is Sylvia ? what is she	359
" Who knocks ? " " I who was beautiful " .	172
Who prop, you ask, in these bad days, my mind ?	4
Why dost Thou shade Thy lovely face ? O why	328
Why so pale and wan, fond lover	413
With how sad steps, O Moon, though climb'st the skies !	394
With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children	51
With sweetest milk and sugar first	279
Within a thick and spreading hawthorn bush .	129
Ye banks and braes and streams around . . .	97
Ye banks and braes of bonnie Doon	101
Ye that with me have fought and failed and fought	317
Yes ! in the sea of life enisled	9
Yet if His Majesty, our sovereign lord . . .	518
Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more .	306
Yet, O stricken heart, remember, O remember .	410
You meaner beauties of the night	512
You promise heavens free from strife . . .	150

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